MY COLONIAL SERVICE

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MY COLONIAL SERVICE

Wm. Dell Vaux

MY COLONIAL SERVICE

IN BRITISH GUIANA, ST. LUCIA, TRINIDAD, FIJI, AUSTRALIA, NEWFOUNDLAND, AND HONG KONG WITH INTERLUDES

By SIR G. WILLIAM DES VŒUX, G.C.M.G.

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

IN TWO VOLUMES

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TO

MY WIFE

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PREFACE

MY official life terminated more than a decade ago, when ill-health caused me to resign the government of Hong Kong. It was passed mainly in distant parts of the Empire, and the same cause which brought it to an end has since precluded me from taking part in public affairs. As it is thus probable that even my name is hardly known to the great majority of my countrymen, I fear that this book, when judged by its outside, is likely to be regarded as the "ponderous biography of a nobody." I hope, however, that such a view may be in some measure modified by a perusal of the contents. For they not only comprise an account of a variety of scenes which are unfamiliar to the great majority of possible readers, but will also be found to throw some light, which I venture to think much needed, upon the manner in which the Colonies, especially the Crown Colonies, are governed.

The principles of Colonial Government have, indeed, been abundantly set forth elsewhere; but in so far as I know, there has been hitherto no attempt to illustrate in detail, at least with reference to the Crown Colonies, the operation of these principles in practice. And this, I submit, can only be adequately done by a personal record of colonial service and administration.

In undertaking the task of compiling such a record of my own experiences of office, I quickly found that these

could not be clearly understood without a general account of my life while they were being undergone; and so I have been compelled to intrude far more of the "ego" than under ordinary circumstances would be desirable, or even capable of justification, in the case of one whose personality can have so little interest for any but his immediate friends.

I have, moreover, been faced with this difficulty. Many of the incidents of my official life have been not altogether to the credit of those who had part in them; and as they occurred, none of them less than twelve, and some nearly forty years ago, a considerable number of these persons are no longer living. A strict adherence to the *nil nisi bonum* principle would thus cause the omission of some of my principal difficulties; but in order to create as little heart-burning as possible from the revived memory of events for the most part forgotten, I have substituted letters, which are not the proper initials, for the names of those, whether alive or dead, of whom circumstances are related likely to be regarded as not altogether to their credit.

Though I am aware that the persons indicated will be recognised by some, yet by this expedient they need not be known beyond a comparatively narrow circle which is already acquainted with most of the doings as herein recorded. As some of these were officers in Her late Majesty's service, I feel specially bound to express my confident belief that, taken as a whole, the public servants in the Colonies are a body of men of whom any nation might be proud, and that though living, as many of them do, in unhealthy climates, they do their work as faithfully, with an at least equal expenditure of time, as their more fortunate confrères at home; while as regards Governors, of whom I claim to be only an average representative, it will be gathered from

my narrative that if they do their duty, the luxurious life they are supposed to lead is at least not an idle or easy one.

As the consequence of several dangerous maladies, including yellow fever and sunstroke, and two serious accidents which caused concussions of the brain and spine, almost the whole of my life as a Governor was a continual struggle against ill-health; and either on this account or for some official duty I was compelled to take somewhat long vacations in Europe.

I have had some doubts whether I should include in my narrative any account of my doings on these occasions. I have, however, decided to do so in order to intersperse with somewhat lighter reading that which is mainly serious and most probably dull. I had the good fortune in these holidays to come in contact with various people, more or less distinguished, my references to whom may prove to be not without some interest. And, further, it has seemed to me that a few touches of home experience might serve to throw into relief the picture of my life in the Colonies.

In an introductory chapter I have given a short sketch of my early life, not that I expect it to have any general interest, but because there might otherwise be attributed to me suppression of what I have little reason to look back upon with satisfaction.

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MY COLONIAL SERVICE
AND ITS INTERLUDES

INTRODUCTION

MY father was the Rev. Henry Des Vœux, a younger son of the first baronet of the name, and grandson of a Huguenot[1] who, emigrating from Normandy, settled in Ireland at the beginning of the eighteenth century. His mother was also of a Huguenot family, being one of the several daughters of Dean Champagné, who, though dying only in 1800, is ancestor of over five hundred persons now living, among whom are twenty-one English peers (including the Dukes of Richmond, Marlborough, Roxburghe, and Leinster), besides thirteen heirs to other peerages. The Dean (whose mother was the daughter of the second Earl of Granard, one of the Englishmen who took part in the capture of Buda-Pesth from the Turks) was the son of Josias de Robillard de Champagné,[2]

[1] I have recently learned that my great-grandfather, here referred to, was pasteur of a Huguenot congregation at Portarlington, and that he received an honorary degree from the University of Dublin; but I have had no opportunity of verifying, and have not therefore included in the text, the statement in Burke's Baronetage that his father was Monsieur de Baquencourt, President of the Parliament of Rouen, and that having incurred the displeasure of his family by becoming Protestant, he, on emigrating, made the significant change of name to "Des Vœux."

[2] I have in my possession the interesting account, written by herself, of the escape from France of Major Champagné's mother (who, born de la Rochfoucauld, signs herself Marie de la Rochfoucauld de Champagné), when her husband's property and her own had been ruined by the Dragonnade. She describes the arrival of herself and family in England, her hospitable reception there, their subsequent removal to Holland because of her objection

Major of a regiment of French Huguenots which took part in the battle of the Boyne.

My mother was the daughter of Mr. George Hutton (afterwards Hutton-Riddell), of Carlton, Notts, and I have heard that she also had Huguenot blood in her veins from her mother, one of the Northumberland Mitfords, and sister of Admiral Mitford, of Hunmanby, Yorkshire, the last male representative of the elder branch of that family.

I specially venerate the memory of my Huguenot ancestors, though differing profoundly from their religious views, because, holding those views conscientiously, they, rather than be forced to change them, faced the loss of their homes and property and preferred permanent exile from their country; and, though laying claim only to an extremely modest share of their great qualities, I attribute to this strain of blood that spirit of resistance to oppression which was the dominant note of my career in the Colonies.

My mother unhappily died when I was two years old, and my father (as I have been told, in accordance with her dying request) married as his third wife[1] her friend, Julia Denison, daughter of John Denison, of Ossington, Notts, and sister of several brothers, all more or less distinguished. Of these the eldest, Evelyn, became Speaker of the House of Commons and Lord Ossington; another, Edward, was at the age of thirty-three created Bishop of Salisbury; a third, William, was successively Governor of Tasmania, New South Wales, and Madras (acting for a time as Governor-General of India); while

to place her sons in the service of a Catholic king, and the sympathetic kindness which she experienced from the Prince and Princess of Orange, whom her husband and her son Josias subsequently followed to England. One of this lady's daughters married, at the Hague in 1692, Charles de la Motte Fouqué, Baron de St. Surin, and two of the sons of this marriage, Baron de la Motte Fouqué and Baron de St. Surin, became distinguished Prussian generals, high in favour with Frederick the Great, the former being grandfather of Friedrich Baron de la Motte Fouqué, the celebrated German author.

[1] His first wife was Frances (only child and heiress of Daniel Dalrymple), in whose right he became lord of the manor of Barrow, Derbyshire.

one of the youngest, George Anthony, was perhaps the best known of all as the Archdeacon of Taunton and Vicar of East Brent—a man who, though deserving by his impulsive bravery the witty sobriquet given him by his friend Lord Lyttelton of "George without the drag-on," was yet held in high respect and affection by those who knew him, even by many, such as Mr. Gladstone, whom on conscientious grounds he had strenuously opposed.

My father had before my birth been for some years Rector of Stapenhill and incumbent of other benefices (which, I am told, then included the present town of Burton-on-Trent) in the gift of his cousin, Lord Anglesey (the first Marquis); but a difference arising between them, he resigned all his preferments and thenceforward never undertook any regular duty. At first he lived principally abroad; and so it happened that I was born at Baden Baden in 1834. We travelled from place to place on the Continent, coming home only for short intervals. Several winters were spent at Dresden—a fact of which, as afterwards mentioned, I was reminded nearly half a century afterwards by the Empress Augusta of Germany, when in 1885 my wife and I were being entertained by Her Majesty at Homburg.

Of this period I know very little. I recollect my German nurse (from whom I learnt her language, unhappily long forgotten), and I faintly remember my nursery, with its great stove reaching to the ceiling, which I believe to have been in Dresden, and also long sittings in the rumble of a travelling carriage. But the strongest impression retained from that time was derived from a great gilt crucifix in the centre of a long bridge, though where this was I have never been able to ascertain. Beyond this memory is blank.

In, I think, 1839, my father brought his family to England, and we lived at first in London at one of the houses in Old Burlington Street. Afterwards he moved to Leamington, where were spent most of my Christmas holidays up to the age of twenty. Our summers were, for

the most part, at the sea; but one was passed at Bilton Hall, near Rugby (once the home of Addison, and then belonging to cousins of my stepmother, the Misses Bridgman Simpson), and another at East Brent with Archdeacon Denison.

Being the eighth of a family of nine, I was not treated at home with much consideration—in fact, I was hardly, even harshly, brought up; and I well remember travelling on the top of a coach during a very cold winter's day, without any great-coat to cover the shivering body, to my first school. This was kept by one Miss Thrupp at Moseley, then a village in the fields at a distance of some two miles from Birmingham, but now, I understand, completely surrounded by the town. Going there at seven years of age, I remained until I was eleven, when I proceeded to the Charterhouse, having received from the second Lord Grey (the Prime Minister of the Reform Bill) an appointment to the Foundation—an appointment which, as carrying with it an almost free education and an exhibition at the University, was (as shown by the letters of the Duke of Wellington) at that time so much in request as to be more difficult to obtain than others of much greater worldly consequence.

I remained at Charterhouse until December, 1853, when, being in the sixth form and head monitor of Gownboys, it fell to me on Founder's Day to deliver the annual Latin oration.

I cannot say that my life at Charterhouse, with its gloomy atmosphere and surroundings, was ever a very happy one. Being probably a specially unattractive boy, I suffered in extreme measure from bullying, then disgracefully prevalent; and yet during my first years there it was always a question with me whether I disliked most my school or my home. But my preference was decidedly for school when, this stage passed, I had become a monitor, and had obtained a place, which I occupied for three years, in the cricket eleven.

Still, even then it was a relief to get away for Saturday and Sunday to my Aunt Grey's house in Seamore Place, or to my Uncle Charles' in Belgrave Square, though these visits were for a boy not of a very lively nature. For my aunt being already an old woman (though she lived for many years afterwards), and my uncle's second family[1] consisting of very small children still in the nursery, I saw nothing of young people. Nor had I the opportunity, except on very rare occasions, to go to any theatres or amusements; and it was a red-letter day when, as a six-foot boy of seventeen, I was considered a sufficiently stalwart protector for a party of ladies going to hear the Ethiopian Serenaders, of which party one is still alive, Miss Bulteel, then maid of honour, and now Lady Ponsonby.

But my aunt's house, though it could not be termed gay, provided me with excellent food for mind as well as body. For at her luncheons I had the opportunity of listening with wonder, not unmixed with awe, to the talk of various statesmen, all of whom were at the time, had been, or were to become Cabinet Ministers, including Sir George Grey, the third Lord Grey, Sir Charles Wood (afterwards Lord Halifax), Mr. Edward Ellice (commonly called "the Bear"), and Lord Panmure (afterwards Lord Dalhousie); and though I cannot say that their conversations were always of a serious character, I suppose it may have been from them that I unconsciously imbibed that inclination to liberal principles which I have ever since retained.

On Sundays I used to accompany my aunt across the Park to St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, of which, I regret to say, my principal recollection is the fact that on two occasions she requested me to admit into the pew Mr. Higgins, the celebrated Jacob Omnium, who was standing at the door. If I had any vanity about my stature, which in after-life

[1] His first wife having been Christina, daughter of Richard Hird, of Rawdon, Yorks, he after her death, when at the age of sixty-three, married as his second wife Lady Cecilia Paulet, daughter of the thirteenth Marquis of Winchester. Like his cousin Lord Anglesey, he had a cork leg, his natural one having been amputated after the battle of Alkmaar in 1799.

I have found rather a disadvantage than otherwise, this circumstance was sufficient to modify it. For in standing by me he looked down upon me complacently from a height of nearer seven feet than six.

At Charterhouse I enjoyed fairly good health, with the exception of one serious illness, in which the kindly nursing of my stepmother provides me with the reminiscence of her upon which I most like to dwell; though at the same time I must not omit to mention the devoted attention of the dear old matron, known to me and all Charterhouse Gownboys as "Mother J." But partly from want of encouragement at home when I did well, and partly from a disposition naturally indolent except when under excitement, I worked only by fits and starts, leaving many intervals of comparative idleness. I was not unfrequently flogged, for the most part deservedly, but sometimes for what was rather my misfortune than my fault.

I was never able to write decent verses, whether Latin, Greek, or English. Poetical imagination was wanting, and a deficient memory could do nothing to supply its place. And yet on every Wednesday for several years I was set to this hopeless work, which, in spite of genuine effort, I always failed to do creditably. At length in despair I began to obtain assistance from other boys, in which "deception" I was more than once detected. Also I had extreme difficulty in learning by heart, and however much I tried I could never master completely the lines of repetition which had to be prepared every morning, and the number of which was too great except for the best memories. It was a rule—and, I venture to think, a bad one—that a boy, whose name had been twice in the week entered in the "Black Book" for faults or omissions, should on the Saturday say the whole "repetition" of the week to the head master, failure in this ordeal involving a third entry in the book, and a consequent flogging. I can say without hesitation that on every one of these occasions I should have met with this unhappy fate, but that Dr. Saunders, the

head master (afterwards Dean of Peterborough), perhaps with kindly intention, was usually inattentive, and thus gave me the opportunity of reading, out of a diminutive Horace or Virgil held in the hollow of my hand under his table, the lines which I ought to have repeated by heart.

Both of these defects caused me discouragement in my work generally (some of which, especially mathematics, I was able to do better than the average of boys), and directly or indirectly contributed to several of my floggings. These, however, were latterly rendered less painful by a friendly monitor, who in taking out the birch would surreptitiously draw it under his foot and thus remove some of the buds.

At last my deficiencies in these respects were recognised as incurable. For though my memory was still strained by having to attempt the impossible, my failure in repetition came to be looked upon with indulgence, especially when I had shown proficiency in other directions. And as regards verses, I was permitted to substitute for this exercise one of Latin or Greek prose.

When this concession was made, the discouragement from which I had so long suffered was in a great measure relieved, and by work, often secretly prolonged far into the "small hours" of the morning, I made a great effort to recover my place in the school, not without a considerable measure of success.

When this improvement occurred, Dr. Saunders, I suppose, came to regard my errors of conduct (which I do not pretend to justify) as at least to some extent excusable, and must also have imagined himself to discern in me other qualities worthy of consideration; for he appointed me monitor as soon as I entered the Upper Fifth, before others who were above me in the school. In that position I am happy to think that I took full advantage of its authority for the purpose of putting down with a strong hand the practice of bullying, from which I had myself suffered so severely. And in recognition, I suppose, of this action on

my part I received on leaving from a number of small boys a present of books—such gifts being then very unusual except when proceeding from friends of similar age with the boy leaving—and I value the memory of this quasi-testimonial more than any other occurrence of my young days. It was a pleasure to learn long afterwards at a Founder's Day dinner from Mr. Eardley Wilmot, who entered the school after I had left it, that in his time my name was still held in kindly remembrance.

From Charterhouse I at nineteen proceeded to Balliol, Oxford, where my eldest brother Henry (the late Sir Henry Dalrymple), then a fellow of All Souls, had taken his degree some years before. My time at the University was spent almost wholly in amusement. I rarely attended lectures, and to my lasting regret I took very little advantage of the opportunity of solid education which was then offered by the distinguished body of Balliol tutors. I was several times "admonished," and it has always been a matter of wonder to me that the leniency of "The Dons" permitted me to escape rustication, which I richly deserved. I passed "Little Go" and "Moderations" almost entirely by means of what I had learned at the Charterhouse, and then in the middle of my third year matters came to a crisis.

My father, who had always intended me for the Church, then told me plainly that he would continue to maintain me at Oxford only on the condition that I should, on obtaining my degree, "take orders"; and he offered as the only alternative that I should seek a livelihood in the Colonies. I was already by no means orthodox in my views, and feeling impossible the pretence of assent to articles which I did not believe, chose what was then regarded as banishment. He, in consequence, declined to discharge my debts, which, though they were eventually paid in full, were a log round my neck for some years.

And so I left the University without taking my degree, and thus came to an end a period which, despite all drawbacks, was the happiest of the first forty years of my life.

Yet I have never ceased to regret the recklessness which caused so utter a waste of precious time; for though by severe work since I partially recovered the ground then lost, I have always felt the impracticability of doing so completely.

In connection with this confession of my Oxford misdoing I may mention a characteristic remark of Professor Jowett. For the first time for more than a quarter of a century after leaving Balliol I met him at Lansdowne House, then in the occupation of Lord Rosebery. After inquiries, addressed to my wife and myself, about our colonial life, he said to me, with one of his cherubic smiles, "Well, Des Vœux, I have heard enough of you from time to time to make me regret we cannot flatter ourselves we had much to do with your education." Unhappily I never saw Jowett again; for though he was kind enough to ask us to name a day for a visit to him at one of his week-end parties, we were, owing to ill-health and absence from England, never able to avail ourselves of his hospitality.

In the autumn before leaving England I was called upon to make my first speech in public. My sister and I were spending a pleasant fortnight with the James Murrays in a cottage occupied by them on the Tay about half a mile below the bridge at Dunkeld. Lady James's brother (Fairholme) had been lieutenant of the *Erebus*, one of the ships of Sir John Franklin's ill-fated expedition, in which my brother Frederick had been mate (his promotion to lieutenant immediately after his departure never having become known to him). During our visit occurred the annual Atholl gathering, and the Duke kindly invited me to accompany his brother to the dinner in Dunkeld Park, at which Lord Tullibardine (the present Duke), then an Eton boy, was also present. As the entertainment was coming to an end I was suddenly touched on the shoulder by one of the guests and told, to my horror, that it was the custom for any stranger present to propose the Duke's health; and so at only a minute's notice I was obliged to

get up and make an impromptu speech. The Duke had been particularly kind to me in respect of fishing and otter-hunting, and I ought to have been at no loss what to say; but whether I should have been able to say it is a question which can never be determined. For as soon as the Highlanders understood what I was attempting to do they, in a body, put their feet upon the tables and made so frantic a noise that after various, no doubt expressive, gesticulations I sat down. After the mention of the Duke's name not a single word could be heard; but my silence was probably quite as effective as the most elaborate oration.

Two incidents of my young days, occurring one in a school holiday the other during an Oxford vacation, stand out clearly in memory as having in each case made me alive to the near neighbourhood of death. When as a very small boy I was with two other boys playing with a pistol, it accidentally went off while in the hands of one of them, the bullet actually grazing the skin of my ear. The boy in question, the eldest son of a peer, who long since succeeded his father as one of the great London landowners, seemed to experience a shock when recently I assisted him to recall a circumstance which I had the better reason to recollect, and which having happened nearly sixty years ago had not unnaturally almost escaped his memory.

The other incident, which occurred in 1855, was to me a much more serious matter, as I remained for several months in fear of the most terrible of deaths. Being at Market Lavington on a visit to the Vicar, the Reverend Mayow Wynell Mayow, I one Sunday after church released from his kennel a retriever, which seemed sleepy and not in the best of health. I remembered afterwards having observed, though I took no particular notice of it, that he had apparently torn down some latticed chicken-fencing within reach of his chain. Suspecting nothing, I played with the dog for some minutes on the lawn, and then went into the house, leaving him at large. Only a few minutes afterwards I heard screams, and looking out

of the window I saw the dog in the act of attacking one of my host's two children, who were coming up the garden path with their nurse. Rushing down at once, I found that the dog had bitten both children, with whom he was ordinarily a great favourite, one of them, a little girl of some eight years old, in the face. Horrified at a misfortune which was in a measure due to my fault, I at once applied my mouth to the wounds for the purpose of sucking out any poison which might have been lodged in them, continuing the process in the case of each child alternately for some minutes. The dog died the next day, and his body having been forwarded to the Veterinary College for examination, was pronounced to have died of rabies. Various supposed remedies were applied to the children, among them being a certain powder sent by the father of the present Lord Clanwilliam, which had the effect of bringing out a violent perspiration on the neck and shoulders. Whether they were thus cured, or whether there was never any virus to remove or counteract, it is impossible to say. But happily the children both escaped hydrophobia, though for months afterwards I was anxious, not only about them, but on my own account. For I had at the time a cracked lip, which a doctor informed me I ought to have had cauterised immediately after the event, thus indicating that I was not altogether free from danger. Happily, however, I escaped all ill effects except a certain nervous apprehension, from which I was not altogether free for some months.

I chose Canada as my destination, not that I knew any more of this than any other colony, but because of the shorter sea-passage, and also because I could get more letters of introduction to residents there. Among these was one from Mr. Edward ("Bear") Ellice to Mr. (afterwards Sir) John Rose, who held a power of attorney for Mr. Ellice's seigniory in Lower Canada, and lived at Montreal. After a stormy passage of fifteen days, during more than a week of which I was unable to eat a single morsel,

I arrived at Montreal in October, 1856. By Mr. Rose's advice I shortly proceeded to Upper Canada (now Ontario), and after visiting Toronto and other places, I finally decided to discard my first idea of farming, as offering little chance of success, and to read law. I therefore entered as a law-student at Osgood Hall, Toronto, in which town I finally settled after a sojourn of some months in the Canadian London.

Finding that I could shorten the ordinary five years of studentship by two years if I were to possess a university degree, I procured admission to Toronto University, being allowed the benefit of my Oxford terms, and after a short spurt of reading passed the examination for B.A. and received that degree.

For some years my law-reading was of a very desultory character. I especially disliked the solicitor's work, which in Canada was then almost necessarily combined with that of barrister. Consequently I took unduly long vacations, partly in the hope of finding some occupation more agreeable to my taste. One autumn I had some weeks of prairie-shooting in Illinois. At other times I visited Saratoga, Newport, and New York; and on one occasion I was chosen as long-stop to play in the Upper Canada eleven against Lower Canada, and took part in the match at Montreal. But my longest holiday was when, after occupying a house at Washington for a fortnight with the late Lord Frederick Cavendish, Mr. (now the Right Honourable) Evelyn Ashley, and Mr. Corbin, we went together to the Southern States and visited Mr. Corbin's plantation in Georgia, as well as other slave-estates in Virginia and South Carolina.

At Saratoga I unexpectedly met "Bear" Ellice, who at an age considerably beyond seventy was making a tour in the United States. He told me that he had escaped from England without the knowledge of his family, who would probably have been solicitous about the health of an old man going alone upon a journey which in those days was

regarded as a much more serious undertaking than it is now. He had come in contact during his life with nearly all the prominent statesmen of Europe, and had a large stock of anecdotes concerning them. His talk was indeed so interesting that one day when I was dining with him at "The Lake," all of some twenty guests stopped one by one to listen to him, and were evidently not bored, as people usually are by monopolists of conversation.

Dining one night at the White House, Washington, with President Buchanan, for whom the honours were charmingly done by Miss Lane, I had the good fortune to sit next to Mrs. Slidell, the wife of the senator who afterwards obtained a world-wide celebrity by the *Trent* affair. Chiefly owing to her bright and lively talk, a dinner which I had expected to be stiff and stately was one of the most agreeable of my life. While in Washington we attended a ball given in honour of Lord Napier, the retiring British Minister, the invitation for which was signed by William H. Seward, afterwards Secretary of State during the Civil War, and also by Senators Mason and Slidell, the Commissioners of the Southern Confederacy, who were taken prisoners on board the *Trent*, only one name intervening between the three.

Among other places at which we stayed in our visit to the South was the house of Mr. Ward McAllister at Savannah; and in the following year I spent some weeks with him at his villa in Newport. This gentleman afterwards became well known by his invention of the name "Four Hundred" for the leading set of New York society. Though, like most men, he had his defects, I have nothing to say but in his favour; for he was always kindness itself to me. It was therefore with special regret that I read his extraordinary book, *Society as I Have Known It*, which was justly subjected to such severe criticism. His references to our party were indeed intended to be highly complimentary; but there are passages in the book which indicate a character so unlike that which I knew as to lead me to

the conclusion that in his latter years he must have been a completely altered man.

In New York I experienced much of that liberal hospitality which is usually extended to educated Englishmen, and I much enjoyed my visits there. During one of these arrived the news of one of the disastrous defeats of the Union army on the Potomac. The excitement created was far less than might have been expected under the circumstances; and in spite of many reverses, the calm resolution of the people to win in the end was most striking. What I observed then was forcibly recalled by the attitude of the British people in the winter of 1899–1900, during the painful occurrences in South Africa.

Though I had a strong sympathy with many of the Southern planters, whose fortunes were bound up with the institution of slavery, the burthen as well as the benefit of which they had inherited from England, I nevertheless wished with my whole heart for the success of the North; for apart from the anti-slavery feeling which had been caused by my visit to the South, it was easy to see that peace established by the recognition of the Confederate States would be very short-lived, and that war between the two kindred nations would be continually recurring until the ultimate predominance of one or the other. By letters received subsequently from Frederick Cavendish I was glad to find that he altogether shared my views, though in holding them he was almost alone in London society.

Having found no opening in other directions, as the time approached when it was possible for me to be called to the Bar, I at last set to work in earnest. For some eight months I read law for ten to twelve hours a day, so that I was able to offer for examination not only the ordinary common law and equity subjects required for "call," but a number of extras, such as Justinian's Institutes and the Principles of the Civil Law, Jarman on Wills, Story on Conflict of Laws, etc. On all of these papers were set; and as I answered nearly all the questions correctly, and

was the only one of several candidates who attempted them, I was somewhat surprised and disappointed that I did not get "Honours." Mr. Gwynne, the Secretary of the Law Society, in reading out the names of those who had passed, simply announced that I had passed a distinguished examination, and I had to be content with that. Mr. Hillyard Cameron, the then leader of the Bar, was unfortunately absent at the time, or he would have been one of the examiners. On his return, however, he expressed to me his indignation that I had not obtained what he considered to have been my due; but I was left to guess what had been the cause of failure. This, however, I accidentally learnt long afterwards when passing through Canada on the way to my second administration of Fiji. At the table of Lieutenant-Governor Robinson, one of those who had been my examiners, in the presence of several others, voluntarily alluded to the subject, and said they were all agreed that my papers deserved "Honours," but that a majority, to his great regret, and against his strong protest, decided that it would be a bad precedent to distinguish one who had been so intermittent in his attendance at his office! He also not indistinctly intimated that there was a prejudice against me as an Englishman—a feeling which, though then somewhat prevalent in Canada, I am happy to think has now almost subsided, probably owing to the improved relations between the mother country and the Colonies.

Shortly after being called, I began the practice of the law (not, I was told, without considerable promise of success) in partnership with Mr. Strong (now the Right Honourable Sir Samuel Strong, Chief Justice of Canada). But after some months' experience I found my dislike of the solicitor's part of the business, which principally fell to my share, to be greater than ever; while even as regards barrister's work, I had serious doubts whether I could withstand the close air of Courts of Justice, which has proved fatal to many better brains than mine. And so I again

began to look out for other employment, which this time happened to be not long in coming.

Through Frederick Somerville,[1] whom and his family I had known from boyhood, I became acquainted with his regiment, the 1st Battalion of the Rifle Brigade, then quartered at Hamilton, some forty miles from Toronto. A captain then serving with the battalion was Lord Edward Clinton (now colonel, and lately Master of the Sovereign's Household). Having become intimate with him in the course of several visits to the regiment, he, learning my wish for a change, kindly offered to transmit an application for a colonial appointment to his father, the Duke of Newcastle, then Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Duke had been in Canada the year previous in attendance upon the Prince of Wales, and mine was probably the first application received from the colony since his return to England. As I had passed the best law examination of the year, he deemed a legal appointment the most suitable; and so in the course of a few months I received from him the offer of a stipendiary magistracy in British Guiana, with a commencing salary of £700 a year. I was at the time under the impression that the colonial service was one like that of India, in which under ordinary circumstances good work brought promotion. It was well that I was thus ignorant; for had I known what I had to face in British Guiana, and that no magistrate of that colony had ever been promoted to another, I should probably have declined an appointment which turned out in the end to have been a most fortunate one.

But though I started for my new post with high hopes for the future, I left Canada with great regret; for I had received there much kindness and made many friends, only a few of whom I have ever seen since, and those only at long intervals. A special subject of regret was my separation from the family of the late Sir John Robinson, Chief Justice of Upper Canada, the first Canadian baronet.

[1] Brother of the eighteenth Lord Somerville (title now in abeyance).

Every Sunday during the years I spent in Toronto I was a guest in his house, which I had come to look upon as a second and more genial home. He died shortly before I left Canada, and it can be truly said of him that never was a man more universally respected by those who knew him or more loved by those who knew him well. Not only he, but all those whom I was in the habit of meeting regularly at his table, became intimate friends, separation from whom caused a pang of regret at least as severe as that from my proper home; for the chances were great that we should rarely, or never, meet again.

And now began my official life, which is the proper subject of this book.

BRITISH GUIANA

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CHAPTER I

Voyage to Guiana in H.M.S. *Nile*—Curious custom—Bermuda and blockade runners—Arrival at Georgetown, British Guiana—Appointed magistrate of Upper Demerara River district—Guiana travelling boats—Negro boat hands and their songs—Description of river—Hyde Park police station—Extraordinary effect of damp—Trial of cases—Great rainfall—Timber punts—Berlin police station—Dalgin Court House—Attack of yellow fever there, and experiences connected with it—Bishop Austin—Christianburg—Extraordinary snoring.

IN October, 1863, I left Canada to take up my appointment as stipendiary magistrate in British Guiana. Embarking at Boston on a homeward-bound Cunard steamer, which carried me to Halifax, Nova Scotia, it was my intention to take passage there in one of the mail packets which then ran from that port to St. Thomas *viâ* Bermuda. But having boarded the *Alpha* to see the deck cabin assigned to me, I found that the pleasures of a sea voyage on a small, narrow vessel, certain to roll heavily in any case, were to be enhanced by a deckload of cattle tied up in such a manner so that their tails were within a few feet of the cabin doors.[1] A prospect so agreeable was not, however, to be realised; for visiting a friend on board H.M.S. *Nile*, the flagship of the station, then on the point of sailing, I became introduced to the Admiral, Sir Alexander Milne, who, on hearing my destination, most kindly offered me a passage.

[1] The Civil War in America being in progress, Bermuda obtained its supplies of beef from Halifax, the regular line of passenger steamers being devoted to its transport.

The *Nile*, her commission nearly expired, was leaving the port for the last time, a circumstance which afforded me the opportunity of witnessing a curious custom, now probably fallen into disuse. A bluejacket stood on the truck of each mast, and whirling a barn-door cock round his head threw it into the water, the boats of the other war vessels in the harbour racing to pick up the birds as they fell. This proceeding symbolised, I was told, retirement from the supremacy of the station.

The popularity of the flagship was pleasantly attested at Halifax as we steamed down the harbour by the firing of guns, the waving of flags, and the plaudits of dense crowds.

During the first half of the voyage, or until we reached Bermuda, I spent the greater part of my time in the cock-pit, where the first lieutenant, Mr. Phillips, generously gave up to me his cabin. For I was always more or less ill, and found from various experiments that going on deck or into the wardroom only made matters worse, besides bringing my sorrows into public view. I thus saw more of the inner life of a man-of-war than I ever have since, though of the 170,000 miles which I have compassed in ocean voyages, over 6,000 miles have been in H.M.'s ships. For, as on every subsequent occasion, I was carried officially, and was usually affected with the same weakness, I saw little beyond the quarter-deck and captain's quarters. On this, my first voyage in a warship, I, as a landsman, had vividly conveyed to me, as no written description could do, what an extraordinary variety of life is compressed into so small a space. One practice I may mention which I have never seen referred to elsewhere. At four o'clock every morning the midshipmen and naval cadets, whose hammocks were slung close to my cabin, were aroused by the boatswain's cry of "Show your legs! show your legs!" reiterated as he paced the deck. Each youth thus addressed was expected to put up one of his "nether extremities" to prove that he was awake and

ready for the watch. While I knew that to get up under such circumstances was part of the happy life of a sailor, a very rough and cold voyage made me specially commiserate the small boys who were obliged to face a freezing north-easter in the dark hours of the early morning.

Of our fortnight's stay at Bermuda, I spent a week with a cousin, Captain Charles Milligan, whom I unexpectedly found in barracks at St. George's, and who, after some years of service on the staff, had just rejoined his regiment.

In the harbour of St. George's there lay at the time a number of vessels employed in running the blockade of the Confederate ports. These were long, low, narrow steamers, and to my surprise all of them painted white—a colour which I had previously thought the most conspicuous of all, and therefore the least likely to avert the disagreeable attentions of the Union cruisers. The stir and bustle caused by these ships served somewhat to arouse the inhabitants from their normal lassitude, so different from that tireless energy I had recently witnessed in the United States and Canada. But the presence of the crews did not add to the amenities of life, for they spent their enormous pay in continual "drinks," and might be seen or heard day and night perambulating the streets with women of all shades of colour, and loudly vociferating in amatory dialogue or drunken squabbles.

At Bermuda Lady Milne left the ship, having so far accompanied her husband, and the Admiral, having thus at his disposal one of his cabins on the poop, very kindly offered it to me. The better air, though of course more agreeable, scarcely improved my condition, which Sir Alexander playfully attempted to alleviate one morning by the tempting offer of a piece of very fat pork, pretending much concern that I respectfully declined to accept what he represented as a sovereign remedy.

At St. Thomas I heard that a mail steamer would shortly depart for Georgetown, and so felt sorrowfully compelled to quit my friends in the *Nile*, from whom I had received so

much kindness. I regretted afterwards that I had been so precipitate, for, owing to delay at St. Thomas, on reaching Barbados I found the *Nile* already there in the roadstead. A very small cabin in the extreme bow of the *Derwent* compared unfavourably in all respects with my comfortable quarters on H.M.'s ship.

I arrived at Georgetown, British Guiana, a few days before Christmas. The Governor, Mr. A., at once appointed me to the charge of the Upper Demerara River District (one of the nine or ten into which the colony was divided), the office of Stipendiary Magistrate being in this case combined with that of Superintendent of Rivers and Creeks. The scene of my future work extended, I found, to southward from a point on the river about ten miles from Georgetown, without other definite limit. As my duties nominally included the protection of the Indian tribes of the interior, my jurisdiction might be held to extend to the borders of Brazil, though in practice previous magistrates had never gone beyond, and rarely so far as the Great Falls of the Demerara, which by the windings of the river are about 250 miles from the sea. There being no suitable house in the district, the magistrate was compelled to have his headquarters in town. I provided myself in this respect, and at once set about procuring a boat, as my travelling could be done only by water.

As I was destined to spend a large proportion of the next four years in them, it may be as well to give here a short description of the boats used for travelling in Guiana by Europeans and the upper class of coloured people. Constructed usually of silverballi (one of the few woods of the country at once hard, durable, and light), they have four to six oars, and are undecked, a space of from seven to eight feet towards the stern being covered by a "tent" of wood. Side awnings protect from sun and rain, while for sleeping removable planks are fitted level with the seats, under which are the lockers for stores. Behind the tent a length of about three feet is uncovered in which sits the "cox." In

his absence the boat can be steered from the tent. The rowers were usually negroes or "coloured men," who, when they got away from town and drink, showed marvellous endurance. I have known them of their own accord labour steadily at the oars for sixteen to eighteen hours, with scarcely any intermission, when they had any special desire to reach their destination quickly. At first when they began to tire I used to give them spirit, but I soon found by experience that this was worse than useless. It put some additional life into the stroke for a short time, but always caused a very quick collapse afterwards. At night the pace was increased when they sang in chorus. The songs, usually led by a Barbadian negro, were much of a kind described in Marryat's *Peter Simple*, remarkable neither for sense nor tune.[1] Only one of these songs, as far as I remember, had in it anything approaching to melody. That was the Union battle-song of "John Brown," with the refrain of "Glory, hallelujah, as we go marching on." And even that, reiterated many times, became, to say the least, monotonous; especially during the night hours when sleep in view of the next day's work was desirable. But however wanting in other respects, this singing was always in good time and no doubt lightened the labour, as it seemed abso-

[1] The chorus of one of them, which I took down in writing and happen to have preserved, ran as follows:—

"He hi ha, bow wow wow, the days of the petticoats are coming,
Never mind the weather, but get over double trouble;
Then we're bound for the happy land of Canaan."

The verses, of which there are many, preceding this chorus were equally nonsensical. For instance:—

"Tom Sayers and Heenan, they made a night to brag,
They swear'd they'd beat all creation;
But the little Malitia Boy did tap him on the nose,
And knocked him in the happy land of Canaan."

This was, o course, a reference to the celebrated prize fight which had recently taken place in England, "Malitia" being evidently intended for "Benicia," and the singers quite innocent of the fact that the "Benicia Boy" was Heenan himself.

lutely essential to good going ; so that whenever there was necessity for expedition I never put an end to it.

A row of about twenty-five miles, or about five hours with the tide, would bring the boat to the first police-station of the district, situate at a village called, for some occult reason, Hyde Park. For some eight or nine miles from town the chimneys of sugar plantations appeared, rising above the mangroves on both banks of the river, which is here from three-quarters of a mile to a mile wide. After that the banks, still almost level with the water, were lined with low, second-growth trees, broken only here and there by the entrance to a "creek" (the local term for the smaller rivers of the country) or by a few coco palms, which indicated the existence in the present or the past of some negro's house behind them, though this was rarely to be seen from outside.

In front of the forest were even more continuous lines of moka-moka, a tall arum with bare stalks, six to twelve feet high, and several inches in diameter at the base, and bearing here and there a large yellow-white flower, but this never in sufficient quantity to relieve sensibly the prevailing green of the vegetation. These lines of moka-moka are a characteristic of all the larger rivers of Guiana, and extend in the Demerara up to the first fall, or about a hundred and fifty miles from the town—the extreme limit of tidal influence. The plant becomes gradually smaller with distance from the sea, in the interior being only about four to five feet high, and with proportionately thinner stalks. Another feature of this lower portion of the river is the great number of wading birds (mostly white, with an occasional pink or brown one) standing in the mud and shallow water near the bank. But after some fifteen miles have been passed, except in the early morning or late evening, when parrots of many kinds flew across, signs of all animal life become few. Here, also, the trees on the banks become higher and present the first sight of virgin forest.

At Hyde Park police-station I usually stayed the night after leaving town. This consisted of a one-storied shingled

wooden house containing four or five rooms, one of them used and fitted as a court-room, having in front a "stelling," or jetty on piles, stretching out into the turbid stream, here about four hundred yards wide. Though a few cottages, constituting the village, were in the immediate neighbourhood, all of them were hidden by dense foliage, and as no human sound, save from occasional boats passing, reached the house from outside, the impression was one of primeval solitude. Only in the room occupied by the black police-sergeant was there furniture of any kind, and here, as everywhere else on the river, except at Christianburg (to be mentioned later), I slept in a hammock. According to the advice of old hands, mine was of soft cotton made by the Indians of the interior, and was wide enough to enable the sleeper to lie at will either diagonally or completely crosswise as well as lengthwise, or to be folded over him for warmth. As a safeguard from insects and, in the forests, from snakes, I had a mosquito net made with arms to cover the ends, and looking in shape like a huge shirt falling to the ground.

On waking in the morning after my first night at Hyde Park, I was astonished to see that my boots, which when taken off were black, had become, during the night, of an equally uniform white, as if from a fall of snow. They were, in fact, completely covered by a growth of fungus—an effect of the extreme dampness of the night air which is observable throughout the interior of Guiana, though not often to the same extent. I may mention with regard to this damp that it sometimes imparts a sensation of extreme chilliness even when the thermometer is in the neighbourhood of 80° Fahrenheit.

On the morning after the magistrate's arrival he usually held his court, the summonses for which had been issued and served by the police or special constables before his departure from town. The charges were rarely of a very serious kind. In certain cases the magistrate's jurisdiction included punishment up to six months' hard labour and

fifty dollars fine; only on rare occasions was anything beyond this required. So that in my first two years, as far as my memory serves me, I did not send more than a dozen cases to the Supreme Court.

The "parties" in this locality were almost exclusively black and dark-coloured people, the exceptions being Portuguese shopkeepers and more rarely Arowak semi-civilised Indians. Assaults and abusive language formed the great majority of charges; but their triviality by no means rendered it easier to get at the truth. Lying for the defence was the almost invariable practice, while the complainant, even when his charge was a just one, commonly lied also in order to strengthen it. Abusive language was punishable when it was of a kind likely to lead to a breach of the peace, and the frequency of its indulgence obliged me to treat it with severity, it being apt to end in assault with any weapon, however dangerous, within reach. One peculiarity of these cases struck me at once. "Liar," "blackguard," "thief," and even unmentionable words were usually received with comparative equanimity; but the climax of "nigger" almost invariably led to blows, and this though the object of the language was as black as Erebus. Here, as elsewhere within my experience, words contemptuous of race are usually more galling than the foulest aspersion of morals.

These cases, which fortunately were sometimes relieved by a touch of the ludicrous, or their endless reiteration would have become intolerably monotonous, usually began thus:—

Magistrate: "What have you got to say against the defendant?"

Complainant: "Oh, massa, he" (or more commonly she) "aboosed me too ba-ad."

Magistrate: "What had you said or done?"

Complainant: "Dun nothing at aal, yr wusship, but he" (or she) "called me——" and then issued forth a long stream of evil names as pat as if learned by heart.

It was generally assumed by the excited witness that the magistrate, who had probably never seen either party before, knew by intuition all the preceding facts and circumstances which might have rendered it intelligible. Not until after many questions, involving much patience, was the truth slowly evolved from obscurity, and not unfrequently it was found, even if there were no cross-complaint, that one party was as bad as the other, the event being the dismissal of the case if trivial, or occasionally the conviction and fining of both parties, the complainant on a new charge ordered to be made out on the spot. Many of the people occupied a whole day, some even two or three days, in going to and from court, chiefly animated, I imagine, by a desire to obtain a pleasing variation from the dull life of the bush rather than any particular vindictiveness against the offender.

Twenty to thirty cases disposed of, a start was made the same evening if the tide suited, or if not, in the small hours of the next morning, for the next court-house. This was at Berlin, about four or five hours further up the river. A short distance from Hyde Park are "The Sandhills," the first rising ground seen since leaving Georgetown. These form part of a ridge running a long distance parallel with the sea about forty miles from it, and probably marking a former coast-line—the whole of the land now used for plantations, besides a vast area still uncultivated, having probably in the course of time been formed by alluvial deposit of the rivers.[1]

The Sandhills passed, signs of human existence become

[1] The annual rainfall on the coast is about 100 inches, and carefully taken observations on the plantations extending some ten miles up the river showed a quantity regularly increasing with distance from the sea. From my experience, I should say that this progressive increase continues for a long distance inwards, and that at the Great Falls of the Demerara the figure would be nearer 200 than 100 inches, perhaps even more; for during the wet season there is a thunderstorm nearly every afternoon there, when the rain comes down more heavily than, in my long experience of the tropics, I have ever seen elsewhere, even in the "record" storm subsequently described, which I witnessed at Hong Kong in 1889. The weight of the drops causes them to

fewer. Often in reaches with a perspective of several miles there was visible not a single indication of the presence of man. Sometimes, indeed, would be seen, but only on near approach, a canoe carrying a single Indian or Creole, creeping silently or phantom-like along the bank in the shade of the trees; and now and then in the absolute silence which prevails in the forest at midday (save for the occasional shrill note of the pi-pi-yo, or very rarely the metallic toll of the bell-bird) there would be heard the sound of paddles long before any boat was visible. Then most commonly appeared the curial (a canoe dug out from a single tree) of bush negroes, Arawak Indians (clothed and comparatively civilised), or Boviander (as are called the offspring of Indian and negro or "coloured"). More rarely would be seen a "woodskin"[1] manned by Indians from the interior (Accawoios or Macusis), who were absolutely naked but for a very narrow strip round the loins. Furthest of all would be recognised the approach of a timber-laden punt, the shouts of its negro crew being audible miles away over the silent water. These punts, though commonly used for taking back to town the black labourers who had been working for three to six months in the bush under the holder of a wood-cutting grant, served only a subsidiary purpose in the carriage of passengers. Their principal use is floating great loads of logs braced to their outside by strong bush ropes (lianes), which, being principally com-

rebound from the water, thus forming with those falling a mass apparently almost solid for several inches above the surface. With such a rainfall it is probable that the water entering the sea from the Demerara, though little more than 300 miles in length, is greater in quantity than that from any river in Europe, and as there are along the coast of British Guiana alone, besides several small ones, three great rivers, two of them—the Essequebo and the Corentyn, with courses from 500 to 650 miles in length, the solid matter carried down by them must be so enormous as to render the extent of alluvial land easily intelligible.

[1] The woodskin, like the curial, was made from a single tree, but simply of the stripped bark turned up at the ends. The material being softer than the solid wood of the curial, and its low freeboard causing the stroke of the paddle to fall upon it noiselessly, these boats approached much nearer than the others before being heard.

posed of greenheart and mora, would otherwise sink to the bottom. I can well remember my surprise at first seeing one of these large punts with its gunwale almost level with the water, though it seemed to carry but a small load within. In fact, many of the exogenous trees of equatorial climates have a specific gravity greater than water. To carry the logs as an inside load would require a much larger vessel of inconvenient draught, so that the mode adopted for bringing them to market is probably the cheapest and best that could be devised.

Berlin police-station was merely a three-roomed cottage, standing solitary in a very small clearing closely hemmed in by the forest. There being no landing jetty, getting out of the boat at low water involved the risk of a plunge in the mud. Furniture was even more gloomily conspicuous by its absence than at Hyde Park, for the officer in charge, being only a corporal, contented himself with merely a deal table and two or three chairs. Needless to say, I slept at Berlin only when it could not be avoided, which was only two or three times during my whole service.

Some few hours' journey above Berlin was the village of Dalgin, in which was the residence of Mr. George Allen, the black Chief Special Constable. In return for the honour and the small pay attached to the office he gave the use of his house for a court-room. The clearing around it was much larger than at Hyde Park, comprising several small buildings, one a schoolroom, which served also as a church. The surroundings were thus somewhat more cheerful than at the places previously mentioned, and the proprietor was a most worthy man, who quickly became a friend and strong supporter of mine.

At Dalgin some nine months after my arrival in the colony occurred one of the great crises of my life. Georgetown and the coast generally were then suffering from a specially severe epidemic of yellow fever. Many new-comers had been attacked, including a considerable number of officers and soldiers of the garrison, and deaths from it had

been in even greater proportion than usual. Coming from town I had held court and slept at Hyde Park, had started early the next day for Berlin, and held court there also. Feeling very unwell, I determined to go on upwards, knowing that if I could reach Dalgin I should be at least somewhat better off than at these places, and should have kindly people to take care of me. Accordingly I started about three o'clock in the afternoon, with my four boat hands, and my black servant steering. Having already on a trip to the gold mines on the Cuyuni River had an attack of chills and fever, I hoped that my shivering and sickness proceeded from nothing worse, and that a dose of quinine, aided by the healthier air of the interior, would quickly make me all right. But unfortunately about sundown there came on a severe thunderstorm, which lasted far into the night. The tremendous rain could not be kept out of the tent, and the pitch darkness also sorely delayed us, it being sometimes impossible to steer but with the aid of the lightning flashes. Consequently, when we arrived at our destination, about nine o'clock, I was very ill indeed, and in the still pouring rain had to be carried to my sleeping-place. This was an absolutely bare room about twelve feet by six, only just large enough for my hammock. Beginning to recognise yellow fever, with the signs of which I was unpleasantly familiar, I took one of several doses with which I had come prepared for such an emergency. These were composed each of twenty grains of calomel and twenty-four grains of quinine, the remedy at that time most in vogue. Some hours afterwards, while I was still conscious, another of these was given to me, and I was told that, according to my request, a third was administered after I became delirious. I thus took certainly forty (perhaps sixty) grains of calomel and possibly seventy-two grains of quinine within sixteen hours! It has always been a question with me since whether the medicine cured the disease or whether my constitution proved sufficiently strong to withstand both.

Towards evening of the next day I came to myself, and found my hammock soaked with blood, which they told me had come from my eyes and ears. But I was decidedly better, and I determined to take advantage of a favourable tide for making my way back to town. On the return passage, save for a single brief stoppage, the hands rowed the eighty miles, or thereabouts, without rest, and we arrived in the harbour of Georgetown the following afternoon after a "record" passage. When still some ten miles from Georgetown, the boat of an inspector of police came up to us. He looked at me for a moment through the awning, and, I suppose, imagining me to be insensible, said quite audibly, "Row on hard, or you won't get him home alive!" But my miseries were not at an end; it took more than an hour to get a conveyance, and meanwhile I was tossed about in the broiling sun by a heavy swell which added sea-sickness to other ills. The result was a relapse, which is usually held to be certainly fatal. But I falsified all prognostications, and chiefly owing to the devoted nursing of the old coloured lady in whose house I lodged, I gradually recovered. I may mention also that another pleasant reminiscence connected with this illness is furnished by the letter of warm sympathy received from a sister-in-law whom I had never seen; my brother Henry having recently married Alice, daughter of Lord Wilton (the first Earl).

It was at Dalgin about Christmas-time, as he reminded me years afterwards on an Atlantic voyage, that I had the pleasure of entertaining at dinner (which included an English plum-pudding) the late and much-lamented Dr. Austin, Bishop of Guiana (afterwards Metropolitan of the West Indies), who was on one of his annual visitations to the river. I see now in my mind's eye his tall, handsome form emerging from the tent of his boat, dressed as correctly as if he were attending a Pan-Anglican gathering, tights, silk stockings, and buckled pumps included. However uncanonical may have been his garments inside

his boat, he was never visible to the profane world in any but the most orthodox episcopal costume. The position which this most estimable man occupied for many years in Guiana was by no means an easy one, and I cannot praise it more highly than by saying that his conduct in it was—in human view—as faultless as his dress.

Some two hours above Dalgin is Christianburg, which in my time was the only civilised residence in the whole district. To the proprietor, Mr. Paterson and his family, I was on several occasions indebted for a bed and other comforts, which were specially appreciated on returning to town after some weeks spent in the bush. There was a large sawmill for cutting greenheart into planks, a considerable extent of out-buildings, and a clearing of several acres, which altogether afforded relief to the eye wearied with perpetual forest.

There was resident at Christianburg in my time a book-keeper named M'Connell, remarkable for a peculiarity to which I have never known a parallel. His snoring was so loud and harsh as to be absolutely appalling to one who, being unprepared, heard it for the first time. Though he was brother of a leading colonist, and would naturally have been lodged in the house, it had been found impossible to keep him there, as his sleep meant the wakefulness of all the other inmates, and so he was given quarters in a distant out-building. Having myself more than once listened to this cacophony, I can well believe the following anecdote told me on good authority. M'Connell and a companion, whom we will call Smith, had started on a journey through the forest, accompanied by several Indians. The party having made their first camp (which in the Guiana forest usually meant a large fire, with the hammocks of travellers as well as Indians hung round it in a circle upon the neighbouring trees), the travellers had gone to sleep, when suddenly Smith awoke, and by the light of the fire saw to his astonishment that the Indians were untying their hammocks. Becoming con-

scious of the awe-inspiring sounds proceeding from his friend's sleeping-place, he at once divined the cause of the Indians' perturbation, and endeavoured to persuade them to remain. Their fear, however, was too great. They bolted in a body, and the expedition had to be given up. Nothing would induce them to return while M'Connell, whom they believed to be an evil spirit, was of the party.

CHAPTER II

Seba—Theft by ants—Adventure with boat hands—Experiences of blood-sucking bats—First Falls—Mr. Forsyth: his reminiscences of Waterton, author of the *Wanderings*—Practical joke with dead snake—Passage of the rapids—Adventure with criminal half-breed—Difficulty with regard to crimes within the jurisdiction of Supreme Court—Child carried off by eagle—Indian path to Essequebo—Charles Couchman's: photograph of tree here appears in Charles Kingsley's *At Last*—George Couchman's timber-cutting grants—Last civilised settlement—The Great Falls of the Demerara—Indian modes of capturing fish—Canimapo; his attempt to murder me.

BETWEEN Christianburg and the First Falls, which are really only rapids, the aspect of the Demerara River in my time remained much the same as below, the only observable difference being the gradual decrease of width, the lessening influence of the tide, the diminishing size of the moka-moka, and the still greater sparsity of human habitation. The journey upwards occupied about twelve hours, or more in the rainy season, and, save in times of exceptional pressure, I usually gave the boat hands a night's rest on the way.

It may be a matter for surprise that there should ever have been pressure in respect of time, but in fact this occurred not infrequently. Some of the witnesses summoned lived far away, at the heads of creeks, and required one or more days' journey to reach the place appointed for court. They would thus lose the better part of a week by their attendance, even if the court were punctually held at the time fixed. If the magistrate then failed to appear, the loss of time would be greater, and any prolonged delay would naturally cause them to return home. As summonses ordinarily required to be issued ten days to a fortnight previous to a court, in order to ensure their being

all served in time, accidents not unfrequently happened meanwhile rendering it impossible, or extremely difficult, for the magistrate to reach his destination punctually. He might be delayed by official business in town, or while on the way up the river might be suddenly called to hold a coroner's inquest (that being among his functions), which, if in one of the creeks at a distance from the main river, might easily cause a delay of days. So that in fact, in order to be as punctual as possible, it was sometimes necessary to travel night and day whenever the tide suited. Owing to this uncertainty being the greater the longer the distance from town, I used latterly, whenever it was necessary to have a court above the First Falls, to issue summonses only when I arrived there, and then wait in the neighbourhood during the interval.

Few places between Christianburg and the First Falls remain very clearly in my recollection, as I never passed a night more than once or twice at any one of them.

I stopped once at the house of a grant owner, by name Alcock. The name of his place was Seba, familiar to readers of Waterton's *Wanderings*, and here occurred an incident impressed vividly upon my memory. Arriving there late one afternoon, I felt too unwell to proceed. The house being temporarily without occupant, I, with permission from the proprietor, made use of it for the night. Having had good reason to suspect the boat hands of pilfering my stores (which were specially precious, as I contemplated a three months' excursion into the interior), I caused some of the packages to be brought into the house and placed near my hammock. Among them was an unopened bag of rice, and my surprise and indignation may be imagined when next morning I found about a third of the contents abstracted. I had heard no one about in the night, although I had been the greater part of it awake, had been several times up, and had, moreover, trained myself to wake at the slightest movement near me. It seemed difficult to understand how such a theft

could have been attempted without instant detection in a spot only some eight feet from my sleeping-place. There was no opening in the bag except a very small hole near the bottom, and being unable to imagine the culprit to be other than human, I supposed that the bag must have been lifted up for the purpose of emptying the contents into some convenient receptacle, without reflecting that in the case of so small a hole this would have been an inconveniently slow process, and the thief incredibly maladroit not to have made a larger one while he was about it. I at once summoned the boat hands, and showing them the depleted bag, called upon the delinquent to confess. All loudly asseverated their innocence, and one of them, presuming upon my condition of illness, became excessively insolent. Believing that he was the culprit and that he was adding insult to injury, I lost my temper and knocked him down. Vain punishment! His head was so hard he was not hurt at all, while my knuckles and hand suffered for a week after!

Continuing too unwell to proceed, I passed another day there, and having occasion to get up during the following night, I saw in the bright moonlight a dark line passing through the doorway. It appeared to be composed of living creatures, and at once striking a light I saw it to be a column of ants (of the kind commonly known as "leaf-carrying," or, in the local vernacular, "cushi") passing through the door. On closer scrutiny I found that half of the column was passing into and the other half out of the house, and thus was the mystery of the theft cleared up; for while the ants entering were all empty-mouthed, those going out were (with the exception of the larger ones, or officers) each carrying a grain of rice. Every few moments, as grains were removed from the hole in the bag, the weight of rice from above caused more to fall out, so that in the course of another night the whole would have been carried off. I traced the column for some hundred and fifty yards, when the density of vegetation upon what had been a

recently abandoned patch of cultivation would have compelled me to desist even had I been in better condition for prosecuting the search. The next morning the ants had totally disappeared; there was a faint mark on the ground showing their line of march, which would doubtless have enabled me, with perseverance and some cutlass work, to find the nest. But as this might have been far distant in the forest, I was unable to afford time for the attempt. I of course made amende to the boat hands, which proved so satisfactory that the physical sufferer expressed a wish to be knocked down again at the same price!

When passing the night on one occasion at a place called Akyma, situate a few miles below the Falls, I was much worried by a bat, which persistently fluttered round my hammock, and I then sought to verify in my own person the blood-sucking habit of these creatures. Having in several instances seen bites involving considerable loss of blood, which had been inflicted during the sleep of the victim without his being conscious of it, I concluded the pain could not be great. There was at that time much scepticism on this subject, notwithstanding the testimony of Waterton, the vampire bat being regarded by many as almost equally fabulous with the vampire itself. That I might be able to speak from personal experience, I put one of my feet outside the mosquito curtain of my hammock and awaited events. The sound of wings soon reached my ear, as if in gradually narrowing circles. All at once I felt puffs of air, as from a fan, on the exposed foot, over which the creature was evidently hovering. But this was too much for nerves weakened by fever and the experiences of the two previous years, and I withdrew the foot into the netting. Summoning courage again, I twice repeated the attempt, each time with the same experience. But though I regretfully confess that I could never sufficiently control myself to receive the bite, I had at least convinced myself as to what would have happened had I permitted it. The blood-sucking habit of these creatures

is now, however, too well established to need such confirmation.[1]

Just below the First Falls in my time, on the left bank of the river, was a small wooden building specially intended for Church service; and on the right bank, somewhat higher up, was a diminutive wooden residence and shop. The latter belonged to a very old Englishman, Forsyth by name, with whom on various occasions I had interesting talks.

[1] Among many instances which at one time or another came under my notice, three are specially prominent in my memory. On my return from England, Nicholson, a young engineer officer quartered in Georgetown, was accompanying me on one of my trips to the interior. I had strongly urged him to bring a mosquito curtain for his hammock as a protection, not so much against mosquitoes (which in the Demerara River are by no means troublesome) as against bats or snakes falling from the trees. He, however, neglected my advice. We slept the first night at the Chinese settlement in the Camooni Creek. Early the next morning I was awaked by a cry from his hammock, which was close alongside. The white cotton of the latter showed a large patch of blood, and on the toe of the foot he was pitifully examining was a small triangular hole, as though pierced by the end of a file. He had evidently lost much more blood than had been taken by the bat, and had he continued with me would probably have undergone the same experience again. So as it was impossible to obtain the necessary curtain, he wisely returned to town.

On another occasion I had arrived late one evening at a small Indian "clearing" on the Upper River. The occupants of the "benab" (small Indian hut), being excited by the arrival of the magistrate, neglected to attend to their own concerns. They had a small boy, who, they afterwards told me, had been brought to his very visible condition of emaciation by continual blood-letting from bats. As a protection they had recently been in the habit of sewing him up every night in a rice bag; but on the night of our arrival this had been forgotten, and though the little fellow had of his own accord inserted himself into the bag, he was not to escape scatheless. He had left the top of his head uncovered, and there in the morning the bat was seen to have left his mark, while a small red patch on the ground showed that the creature had not "taken nothing by his motion."

The propensity of the vampire to come again and again to the same person was shown in another case, which occurred within my experience years afterwards. While I was administering the government of Trinidad (where the Governor had been compelled to enclose with wire-netting the stalls of his stables, owing to injury from bats suffered by his horses) my wife and I were spending a few days on the islet of Monos, in the Gulf of Paria. Her English maid had the bad habit of putting her foot out of her mosquito curtain, and she paid for it on this occasion severely, for she was bitten by a bat two nights successively in the same place, in her foot, and lost much blood on each occasion.

He told me he came to Guiana as a boy, and that shortly after leaving England on his voyage thither, he had seen the fleet of Nelson returning from the battle of the Nile. He well remembered Waterton, the author of the delightful *Wanderings*, and told me many particulars of his eccentricities. The story told by Waterton, about his ride on the alligator as it was being dragged out of the water, Mr. Forsyth believed to be absolutely true, as it was a matter of common talk at the time. One of the naturalist's peculiarities was the habit of using the smooth surface of the water every morning as a looking-glass while shaving. So imperative in those days was the fashion of smooth lips and chin, that a moustache could not be tolerated even in the bush.

Though on subsequent occasions I usually had my hammock hung in Mr. Forsyth's house, on my first trip I slept in the church, for which the magistrate had permission from the bishop. Mr. Plummer, my predecessor in the district, who accompanied me, happened to kill, close to the building, a "labarria" snake, a very deadly species. As the boat hands were at some distance and did not see this, it occurred to him to get some amusement from it. He accordingly coiled up the body of the snake upon the church steps and managed to erect its head in a threatening attitude. When the men who had been ordered to hang our hammocks in the church saw in the rapidly failing light this creature barring the way, their attitude of fright was beyond expression ludicrous. After a time, one of them cut down a sapling some twelve feet long, and with absurdly cautious approach brought it down bravely on the dreaded reptile snake at a very safe distance. This doughty feat achieved, the fellow strutted about with the air of a conqueror. The incident gave us much amusement, and put some life into a tired and somewhat sulky party.

Though the First Falls are only rapids, the current is far too fast to permit of ascent by other means than hauling.

This was done in places from the bank, but principally from shallow spots in the stream. The rush of water in the rainy season was such that I have seen men carried off their legs when they were immersed little above the ankles. Descent of the rapids was made with oars or paddles, the time occupied as compared with ascent being as minutes to hours. I always shipped a special coxswain for this purpose, usually an Indian of the neighbourhood, as the experiment would almost certainly have had a fatal end with an inexperienced hand at the helm. Consequently, although narrowly escaping, I never had an accident.

One afternoon, after a long expedition into the interior, we were, when some half an hour from the Falls, hailed by an Indian, who informed us that a woman had just been nearly killed by her "Boviander" husband. Going at once to the place she indicated, I found the woman grievously injured, and apparently dying. I at once took her deposition, which, though extracted with much difficulty, fully confirmed the information given. Starting again in my boat, we had reached a point some three hundred yards above the rapids, when the Indian coxswain pointed out the accused man, paddling his curial up-stream. I hailed him, and he, being evidently unaware that I knew of the crime, at once came alongside. I ordered him to get into my boat, and when he showed a disposition to push away and escape, commanded the boat hands to hold fast to his canoe and the constables to arrest him. The latter, however, who on this occasion were Indians, were in too great fright to touch a notorious bully, who was, in fact, the terror of the neighbourhood. Though in those days I was not wanting in strength, it is probable that, in an encounter, the man in question would have been more than a match for me even on land. When, therefore, I put my hand upon him to arrest him myself, it is tolerably certain that, had he resisted to the utmost, he would have had the best of the struggle, which would have inevitably resulted in our both being thrown into the water. As it was, his resistance

being slight, I got him into my boat without great difficulty, when the cries of the Indians drew my attention to our position. During the above scene the boat had been drifting, and was now close to the Falls, going broadside on to them. To have been caught by the rapid in this position was inevitably to have been swamped, and the greater part of us drowned.[1] But by frantic efforts the boat was turned in the right direction, just as the quick water was reached.

Arriving safely at Mr. Forsyth's, I had the prisoner secured there, but finding that the terror of him was such that he would otherwise be very probably allowed to escape, I was obliged to have my own hammock slung across his door. Next day I tried him. His wife, being then considerably better, and having been carried across the portage in a hammock, gave her testimony again, in his presence, and altogether the evidence against him was quite conclusive. Yet I was in some difficulty in coming to a decision. If the case were to be remitted to the Supreme Court, which could alone award a sufficiently severe sentence, it was almost certain that the offender would escape punishment altogether, owing to the absence of the necessary witnesses. The woman on recovering would be made to disappear, while not only fear of making a dangerous enemy, but the Indian dread of appearing in the Supreme Court under any circumstances, would have caused the others to avoid the subpœna by hiding in the interior. On the other hand, there was a risk in dealing with the case myself, as the woman being in a very feeble condition, there was yet a chance of her dying. Under the circumstances I postponed sentence, and carried the man on with me down the river. When a few days afterwards I heard that his wife was recovering, I sentenced him myself to six months' hard labour, the heaviest penalty it was in my power to inflict.

[1] In fact, this actually happened about the same time to a party in a similar rapid of the Massaruni, when several lives were lost, including the son of the Governor and one or more naval officers.

About two hours' journey above the rapids was an Indian settlement of two or three "benabs" (thatched sheds without walls), which was the scene of a singular occurrence. Passing there one evening in my boat, we saw an Indian woman crying on the bank, and upon inquiry I learnt that her two little children, one about three and the other under two years old, had gone together to play in the forest. Only one returned, and he was unable to give any account of what had occurred to his brother. A number of Indians had come to assist in the search; but though two days had passed, the missing child had not been found. It was supposed that some animal or bird of prey had carried him off. On my next journey up the river, which, owing to an intervening visit to England, was not for some months, I heard, on good authority, that a piece of the linen rag that the child had on him was seen on the top of a forest tree, rendering it probable that the captor was a harpy eagle, one of the largest species in the world. I never saw one of these birds, except in flight far up in the sky; but the claw of one, in the possession of the superintendent of the penal settlement on the Massaruni, had a leg nearly as thick as my wrist, making it easy to suppose that the Indian stories as to the size of the prey carried off by these birds are not exaggerated.

Some four hours above the rapids was the woodcutting grant and log house of one Charles Couchman. Here is the nearest point between the Demerara and the Essequebo, and one end of an Indian "path," which I most frequently used for passing from one river to the other, the walk across occupying six to eight hours. At the edge of a small clearing around the house stood a tall mora. Having carried a photographer with me on one of my circuits for the purpose of getting pictures of forest scenes and native groups, he took one of this tree. I appear in the picture standing against the trunk, and one of the boat hands is sitting on a log close by. Years afterwards in St. Lucia I gave a copy of this picture to Charles Kingsley, when he

visited me there, and a print of it appears in his book *At Last* over the legend, "The Last of the Giants." It would no doubt be regarded as a giant in Trinidad, where readers of the book probably supposed it to grow; for the greater part of the land in that island has at one time or another been cleared for cultivation, and the trees are thus mostly smaller than those of virgin forest. But being only about 190 feet in height, it is not, I think, a specially tall tree of its kind, which is equalled in this respect by many others, and is, indeed, greatly surpassed by some, the Brazil-nut and the silk-cotton sometimes reaching a height of 250 feet and more.

Above Charles Couchman's, at a distance of some two hours' journey by boat, was the house of his brother, George Couchman, also the owner of a wood-cutting grant, for whom I always had a special regard. Though, judging by his full brother Charles, he must have had negro blood in his veins, he might easily have passed for a white man. He had married an Indian wife and had lived so long among the Indians that no man in the colony understood them better, and it was through him and his interpretation of their languages that I learnt most of what I ever knew of this strange people. His house was always a resting-place for travellers from town, including the itinerant missionary clergyman and the bishop on his annual visit. He and his family, like all inhabitants of the river above Christianburg, slept in hammocks, such a thing as a bedstead or bedding being an unknown luxury. He had, however, taught his wife the virtue of cleanliness, and on this account, in the many days and nights when my hammock hung in his verandah, I had comfort rarely experienced elsewhere. With him, also, I obtained change of food, which was most welcome after a long course of tinned meats, salt fish, biscuits, and flour dumplings; for he had Indians continually "hunting" and fishing for him, and after this fare a fresh fish "pepper-pot" and the flesh of deer, tapir, *accouri*, or *labba*, however inartistically cooked, seemed to be palatial luxury.

Mr. Couchman was a Justice of the Peace, and complaints were usually sent to him to await my arrival, unless they were of sufficient gravity to warrant a special messenger. As a rule the only cases of importance tried above the rapids were charges for unlicensed cutting of timber on Crown land. Except, of course, on private land, which above Christianburg existed only in one or two places, the cutting down of greenheart, mora, and other valuable timber trees was legal only under special licence from the Governor. Cutting on the part of persons without any licence was rare, as the necessity of making a timber path [1] to the water for bringing the logs to market rendered discovery almost certain. The charges, therefore, were almost invariably against licensed holders for transgressing the limits of their grants. For the licences were good only for special areas with fixed boundaries, and any transgression rendered the licensee as liable to penalty as if he had no licence at all. When any new licence was granted, it was the duty of the magistrate to inspect the boundary posts placed by the surveyors. The grant was always an oblong area, usually, I think, about two miles in length and about half a mile in width, with the base on a river or creek. The surveyor always cut a narrow path along one of the long sides and also along the short side furthest from the water, being thus able to determine the position of the four corner posts. Though three of the boundaries were thus clearly defined, the fourth, being only an imaginary line through dense forest, was not so obvious. Though this boundary might have been easily ascertained by the grant-holder, yet his neglect to do so had been so long tolerated, that during my first year I did not exact a penalty (fifty dollars fine or six months' imprisonment, or both) unless depredation had been very serious. When, however, the

[1] A timber path was a wide road cut through the forest, across which, at intervals of every few feet, log sleepers were placed, in order to permit of the squared logs being dragged more easily to the water. The hauling was done by large gangs of men, sometimes assisted by oxen.

trespass had been beyond the surveyor's line and the necessary timber-path for the logs joined that of the grant-holder, I had no mercy, as it was then clear the offence must have been committed with the latter's connivance. These cases gave a great deal of trouble, and the conflict of evidence was sometimes such as to involve a delay of one or more days occupied in personal inspection.

Some four hours above Yawaribaro (the Indian name of Mr. Couchman's residence) was the house of one Giles, a negro grant-holder, which was at that time farther in the interior than any other non-Indian residence. Thence inwards to Brazil there were only aboriginal inhabitants.

Two hours above this place were the Great Falls, which, in addition to rapids, comprise a most picturesque cascade of about forty feet in height. The pools below of dark, clear water contain many paco, a large flat-fish of about the size of a turbot, which is very good eating, and is easily hit by Indian arrows. These are sometimes attached by string to the bow or the arm, so that the fish, when pierced, can be at once landed. When the object is so far off that the string would spoil the shot, the arrow is allowed to go free. It has a loose point, which, on striking the fish, becomes partly detached, allowing the long reed which forms the shaft and is still held to it by a short cord, to float on the water. The shaft indicates the position of the fish which has carried off the arrow, and if a large one, it becomes the object of an exciting chase in woodskins. On several occasions I had much amusement from this sport, and made frequent efforts to learn the art of fish-shooting. But I cannot say I ever became proficient, though, having practised archery when a boy, I soon learnt to shoot with the native weapon at a mark above water almost as well as the Indians themselves. Indeed, in this latter respect they never seemed to me to be remarkably expert, the acquisition of guns having probably caused intermittence of practice with the inferior weapon. To hit a mark under water, however, is quite another matter. Not

only does refraction cause the object to appear in a different position from its real one—a difference which increases proportionately with the depth—but, unless the shot is perpendicular, the resistance of the water deflects the arrow upwards, both contributing to a miss from aiming at the wrong place. Much practice is needed therefore to be able to judge with accuracy the right point at which to strike the surface.

Another method of fishing I have seen practised with great success. The Demerara is unsuitable for it, as, except at very low water in the first rapids, the portion of the river beyond tidal influence as far as the Great Falls, and even many miles beyond them, runs in only one channel. The Essequebo, on the other hand, in most of its rapids is studded with islands and rocks, and so divided into many streams, some narrow enough to be easily stopped with large stones, enabling the water, but no fish of any size, to run through. The place required is a large, deep pool with a narrow entrance at both ends. On the day previous to the fishing the Indians have been engaged in finding, cutting into convenient lengths, and then macerating with clubs, a certain bush-rope (liane). The juice is caught in a woodskin and diluted with water, the mixture being a yellowish-brown liquid about the colour and consistency of thin pea-soup. During the night the two means of exit from the pool are suddenly blocked by large stones previously made ready for the purpose, and in the early morning one or more canoe-loads of this liquid, according to the size of the pool, are thrown into the stream above the upper entrance. In the course of a few moments, as the drug mixes with the water in the pool, the paco, partially stupefied, appear rising to the top of the water, and then the fun begins. Some of the Indians are content to stand on rocks and thence to shoot the fish with arrows; but others, screaming with excitement, jump into the pool, and, swimming and wading, endeavour to catch the prey in their arms and carry them to land. This is no easy task,

for the paco, though half intoxicated, is quite able to struggle violently when seized, frequently carrying a man off his legs, even when he has already touched ground with his feet. In the course of an hour or so all the fish that it is possible to capture (some recovering themselves after a time) are safely landed; but the excitement and laughing over the ridiculous sights witnessed often continue all day and far into the night. I always enjoyed these scenes greatly, the prolonged merriment serving as a welcome relief to the sombre life of the forest.

A short distance below the Great Falls, on a rising ground, was the settlement of an Accawoio Indian, named Canimapo. He always had a large number of dependants who were much in awe of him, and he was in this respect more like one of the native chiefs whom I have known elsewhere than any other Indian of my acquaintance in Guiana. Though my relations with him were, in appearance, friendly during the whole of my service in this district, they were on my part cautious after the following occurrence. Accompanied by the photographer above mentioned, I stayed two nights in his settlement. On the first morning after arrival, with much difficulty I induced him and some of his people to be photographed in groups, and perhaps imprudently allowed him to see the negatives. He appeared not merely astonished, but alarmed, and the whole day and far into the night the sound of excited talking could be heard coming from his benab. In the evening he sent me as a present a fresh-fish pepper-pot, which the Indians usually made very well, and which, though far too pungent for the taste of a newly arrived European, is grateful to the jaded palate of one who has been a few months in the equatorial heat. Fortunately for me, when the present arrived, we had already finished our dinner, and I gave the pepper-pot to my boat hands, who partook of it freely. In a short time all became ill, two so violently that I began to fear fatal results. Yet whether through strong doses of brandy and chlorodyne, or from strength of constitution, they quickly

recovered, and at daybreak next day they were ready and, I may add, anxious to proceed with our journey. I did not then suspect intentional poisoning, but a circumstance occurred almost immediately after starting to arouse our suspicion. I was sitting on the top of the tent of my boat, as I frequently did before the sun rose above the trees, for enjoyment of the fresh air, and on the look-out for a passing shot. Hearing a flight of parrots coming, I asked for my gun. As it was handed up to me, stock upwards, some dirt fell out of the muzzle. Examination showed that both barrels had been plugged with mud, some of which, having dried, had thus betrayed its presence. This could not have been the result of accident, as a space of some two inches at the end of each barrel was clean and bright. However caused, the obstruction would inevitably have burst the gun had I fired it. The escape was therefore a narrow one.

On this discovery I at first thought of going back and charging Canimapo with attempt to murder me; but on second thoughts I refrained from doing so. In view of the awe in which he was held, I reflected that with the very imperfect interpretation at my command, it was scarcely conceivable that I could bring the offence sufficiently home to him to warrant referring the case to the Supreme Court, while to fail in obtaining a conviction would be far worse than leaving the matter alone. It happened also to be important that I should get to town quickly, and all things considered, I determined to ignore the matter altogether. Mr. Couchman informed me afterwards that the old savage had probably been much frightened by seeing the picture of himself. He conceived the notion that this gave me some occult power over him, and that his only hope of safety would be in my death. My double escape doubtless made him regard me as invulnerable. More than once afterwards I stopped for the night at another settlement of the same chief, at some distance above the Great Falls, when he showed me a respect which amounted almost to servility, and strikingly unlike the ordinary indifference of

Mr. Couchman Canimapo The Author

VISIT TO CHIEF CANIMAPO

I.—*Face p.* 50

the aborigines. But "once bitten twice shy," and on the principle of "Timeo Danaos," I was, after the above occurrence, always wary of his presents.

At the Great Falls the magistrate's jurisdiction practically ended. Without the aid of a force of men I never had at command, it would have been impossible to carry a tent boat over the portage, and any travelling beyond was necessarily done in an Indian woodskin, which, having no shelter, was by no means comfortable in rain. The population, moreover, being entirely composed of Indians who had very rarely or never been in contact with white men, was so sparse that settlements, rarely exceeding a dozen people, were several days' journey apart. British law nominally prevailed; but it was in my time utterly unknown there, and any attempt to enforce it would have been fruitless. For these reasons no magistrate before my time, so far as I could ascertain, had ever ascended the river further; and though, taking advantage of my office as Protector of Indians, I on several occasions made expeditions into the further interior, I cannot say that I did so from any strong sense of duty, or from expectation of any great good to arise therefrom. In fact, I much preferred the wild life of the bush to the society of the coast with its never-ending talk, and all-pervading atmosphere, of sugar; and I was, moreover, curious to visit an almost unknown region, and to observe the habits of people, many of whom had never seen a European, as well as to learn something from the unaccustomed sights and sounds of an almost untrodden forest.

CHAPTER III

The tributaries of the Demerara—Scenery of creeks—The troolie palm—Delusion about tropical vegetation—The Camoonie Creek—A settlement of Chinese—Instance of Chinese honesty—First experience of tropical forest—Its distinctive characteristics—Verification of timber-grant boundaries—Savannahs—Adventure with snakes—Day sounds of the forest—Cries of goatsuckers.

HITHERTO I have been dealing with the main river; but there are many creeks tributary to the Demerara, which in any climate with less rainfall would themselves be regarded as rivers. Some of them are navigable by boats for two or more days' journey. Though I never held court upon their banks, the duty of inspecting wood-cutting grants, and once or twice of holding a coroner's inquest, necessitated considerable acquaintance with them. Indeed, in selecting a suitable site for the Chinese settlement, to be described later, I went almost to the limit of canoe navigation, up most of the streams entering the Demerara within forty miles of Georgetown. In their vicinity the richness of equatorial vegetation is perhaps more striking than anywhere else—and by "equatorial" I distinguish the flora within a few degrees of the line from the less luxuriant vegetation of countries nearer the outskirts of the tropics. The light furnished by the opening to the sky between the trees on each bank permits of a dense undergrowth which is almost entirely absent in the eternal gloom of the forest, and is seen elsewhere only in swamps in which large trees are extremely few. Though no description, however vivid, of a whole which is made up of such an infinity of details ever presents a true picture to the mind, it may be mentioned that the principal characteristic which distinguishes the banks of these streams

from those of temperate climates is the total invisibility of the soil which supports the vegetation, every inch of it, even in places recently laid bare by the water, being covered with plants struggling for the mastery. Here a clump of tree ferns, there a single wild banana or a group of prickly palms show themselves above the confused chaos beneath; more rarely a great bunch of feathery bamboos, which I always, rightly or wrongly, regarded as exotic and indicating former civilised residence. But in the creeks within seventy miles of the coast the most striking object is the troolie palm, which shoots its enormous fronds directly out of the ground at the edge of the bank to a height of thirty feet and more. I am inclined to think that these palms do not exist, or are at least very rare, in the far interior, for I never saw one growing there; the Indian benabs were not thatched with them, though their leaves are for this purpose incomparably superior to any others, and are, when obtainable, invariably used for it, both by the Indians and the coloured people who live nearer the coast. Other leaves which especially attract notice are those of what I supposed was a species of arum, and are larger than any I have ever seen elsewhere. I recall one in an upper reach of one of the creeks (I think that named Hibibia) which was so large that drooping down from its stalk it made a graceful arch over the channel through which my canoe passed. When approaching the source of one of these streams, way has to be made through water-lilies growing completely across the channel, while the giant trees on either bank seem to make a special effort to occupy the narrowing avenue of light, and are joined together by innumerable lianes, until at length, while there is still water for the canoe, they meet overhead, and there is thus a midday twilight scarcely less obscure than that of the forest.

I may mention here that those who, excited by the glowing descriptions of imaginative writers, expect the green of the vegetation to be diversified by great masses of other colours, will almost certainly be disappointed. In Trinidad

frequently, and occasionally in Guiana, I have seen here and there a great tree covered with blossoms of yellow or red; but these were never otherwise than very sparse, except in the immediate neighbourhood of civilised dwellings, so that for the most part they had in all probability been artificially planted. Such a sight in the Guiana forest is not a common one, and the picture of a creek would ordinarily be untrue to nature if, beyond the immediate foreground, it showed any other colour than the blue of the sky-path above, the clear coffee-brown of the stream, and the varied shades of green in the vegetation. Other colours, showing here and there in some red or purple orchid, or cream-white water-lily, cover what is comparatively so insignificant a space that they require to be very close to the eye to have any appreciable effect.

The largest and perhaps most important of these creeks is the Camoonie, familiar to the readers of Waterton's *Wanderings* as being the scene of his famous interviews with big snakes. It was here that I selected the site for the Chinese settlement which Mr. Edward Jenkins, the well-known author of *Ginx's Baby*, has described in *The Coolie: his Rights and Wrongs*. As that book was published nearly thirty years ago, I may mention here that, through the representations of a specially intelligent Chinese, by name O Tye Kim, having become interested in the forlorn condition of many of his countrymen who had completed the terms of their indentures on the sugar estates, I induced the Governor to move the Legislature for a grant in aid of a settlement for them. The amount voted, however, was so small as to permit of nothing beyond maintenance for the people during such time as was required for the clearing of the land, the building of their houses, and the reaping of the first crops. All the Crown land within reasonable distance of a market was occasionally flooded, and as no expense could be incurred for dams, it was necessary to select what was least subject to this scourge, and that, according to the best available advice,

was on the left bank of the Camoonie Creek at a short distance from the main river. When I last saw the settlement some six years after its establishment, and some three years after I had ceased to have the power to take active interest in its concerns, it appeared to be in a somewhat languishing condition, owing to a recent flood, and I am unaware whether it still exists; but it will probably in any case have been of one permanent benefit to the colony in showing the economical superiority of the Chinese method of charcoal burning in large clay kilns over the comparatively clumsy and wasteful system previously in use by Creoles and natives. Certainly it caused some two hundred people for several years to be freer and happier than they had ever before been in the colony, and so I never repented the labour expended on its establishment.

One circumstance connected with the settlement afforded a touching instance of combined honesty and gratitude. The public money being insufficient for the number of people desirous of taking plots, I had helped some few of them with small sums for their maintenance. Among these were two whose strength proved insufficient to make much headway with the great hard-wood trees on their lot, and they suddenly disappeared, being in my debt at the time. Never expecting to hear of them again, I was astonished some months afterwards by the receipt of the money in full. The men had indentured themselves anew to a plantation in Berbice, and the payment of this money had taken much the greater part of the fifty dollars which they had each received in bounty money.

It was, if my memory serves me, in the Camoonie that I had my first experience of a tropical forest while inspecting the boundaries of a new grant. I am bound to say that at first all other sensations were subordinate to an instinctive fear of snakes. In walking along the narrow and newly cut path, the least stir in the herbage around seemed to indicate the presence of the dreaded enemy; for I did not then know that in the great majority of cases it

was caused by lizards, which exist in Guiana in many shapes and sizes, including the big bloated iguana which has its home in the trees, and the more slender salimpenter, sometimes exceeding five feet in length, which lives on the ground, and, as the natives know to their cost, is addicted to carrying off chickens. But though there is, of course, considerable danger from snakes in the forest, and though every native, whether Indian or Creole, keeps his eye on the ground when walking there, and rarely omits to look at each place where he puts his foot, yet in all my marches, of several hundreds of miles in the aggregate, the number of snakes met with scarcely exceeded a dozen. Owing to the remarkable manner in which the colour of snakes assimilates to their surroundings, it is certain that the majority escaped notice, and as so few were seen, the fear of the creature soon ceased to be troublesome.

One cannot help being immediately struck with the dissimilarity of the Guiana forest from any to be seen in a temperate climate. This is not so noticeable in the foliage, for in the depths of the forest palms are rare, the superior height of the exogenous trees depriving them of light, and so for the most part killing those few which spring up; and the mora, everywhere abundant, where its outline can be seen, is not unlike a gigantic elm. But the trunks of this and many other trees are, near the ground, surrounded by buttresses which seem to be provided by nature for the support of the huge columns above them, so that a transverse section at the base, instead of being round, is star-shaped. Again, up to a height of eighty to a hundred feet, no branches appear, all the strength of each being apparently required for success in the desperate struggle for light far above. So dense is the green canopy thus created that one may walk for miles without seeing a single peep of blue sky, and it is wonderful that the prevailing gloom is not even more intense.

But though forest-walking on Indian paths always gave me a certain pleasure, I must confess that this grant duty,

when the novelty wore off, was almost wholly disagreeable. The necessity for straightness in the path caused it to be made through or over every intervening obstacle. It passed through swamps where every foot of progress had involved severe cutlass work, and where consequently the abundance of lopped plant-stems rendered walking arduous and painful, while razor-grass insufficiently cleared was continually tearing clothes or skin. Moreover, the path went up and down steep gulleys, where many a tumble was caused by rock or root hidden under the carpet of decayed leaves—all these disagreeables being bearable enough in the excitement of sport, or when passing through unexplored country, but trying the temper far more severely when experienced in the performance of a by no means interesting duty. When, in addition, one was soaked with rain and covered from head to foot with *bête rouge*, causing an almost maddening irritation during momentary stoppage of exertion, not to mention ticks requiring to be scraped off the skin with a knife, and leaving a burn as if made with fire, the circumstances were indeed trying, and would have exercised the patience even of an archbishop.

But the scenery of these creeks was not exclusively of forest. Occasionally one came upon a savannah of a few hundred acres—a flat expanse of very long grasses, pools of water being visible here and there, mostly covered with water-lilies. The only prominent objects rising above the general level were a few palms, chiefly of the Eta variety with great fan-shaped leaves. These are the trees which the Warau Indians of the Lower Orinoco, the Barima and the Waini use, or formerly used, for their temporary homes, for their principal food, and other useful purposes. To protect themselves while engaged in fishing from the floods and other enemies, biped and quadruped, they built their huts up in the branches, while a farinaceous diet, much resembling sago, was made from the pith. The enormous number of these trees in the places named gave a practically inexhaustible supply for these and all other purposes.

Now and then on the savannahs a great crane showed himself above the surface of the grass, intently watching for his prey in the water, while a kind of bittern (called here and in the United States by an unmentionable name which describes his peculiar habit in getting up), rising lazily before the canoe, gave a tempting shot. I never but once, however, attempted to kill one of these, having then learned that the bird when dead was totally useless, except to a collector.

Ducks were occasionally seen in the open water, but they were few and very difficult to approach. The endeavour to get a shot caused me one of my few disagreeable experiences with snakes. I was in a very small "curial" (or dug-out canoe) with a single Indian steering, using the bow paddle myself. A flight of ducks was marked entering the forest at the side of the creek, and on reaching the spot I found that the water had overflowed the bank and covered the ground as far as it was possible to see. Being doubtful whether the birds had settled in it, or upon the trees (where, as in the case of the wood-duck of North America, they not infrequently alight), I had put down my paddle and taken hold of a branch for the purpose of dragging the canoe inwards, when suddenly a large labarria snake dropped from the tree into the exceedingly short space between me and the bow—in fact, within a foot of my bare leg. The start which I gave nearly upset the rickety craft and half filled it with water. But fortunately the snake was even more alarmed than I was, and, making off over the side, disappeared before I could take up my gun.

My only serious encounter with a snake was in the course of one of my longer journeys. From an Indian settlement above the Great Falls, and near the source of the Demerara, I had gone with a single Indian for a day's walk into the forest in search of something to shoot. We had had no luck, and in the afternoon, when far from home, met with heavy rain. It would be thought that the naked skin of the Indian would be so inured to the climate as to

feel no inconvenience from the heaviest storm; but in fact he has a feline dislike of the least downpour, especially when the heat produced by hard exercise makes the drops feel the colder. Consequently he will place himself under the densest foliage he can find until that no longer affords shelter, and then, when obliged to move, he will, if possible, find a large palm leaf which he uses umbrella fashion while walking.

On this afternoon we were delayed many precious minutes by this shelter-seeking, which was to me all the more irritating, as being myself scarcely more clothed than the Indian himself, I was suffering no unbearable inconvenience. It was late when we started for home. The Indian went off at a tremendous pace, making it difficult with my tired legs and sore feet to keep up with him. But I knew from experience that getting home before dark is, with the Indian, a sufficiently powerful motive to make him forget all other considerations; and to be left alone in the forest, with nothing to indicate the route except a few twigs which had been broken for the purpose when passing in the morning, and which night would render entirely invisible, was no pleasant prospect. While hurrying along in this way, I was suddenly startled by a frightful shriek from the Indian, and I immediately saw that he was jumping away from the coils of a great "bush-master" snake (called by the Indians Cooni-Cushi). The creature had no doubt been asleep, and was aroused by the touch of the Indian's foot. Before I could stop myself I was close up to the brute, whose head with laterally waving tongue was raised for striking within a yard of my thigh. In an instant I covered him with my gun and pulled the trigger; but the rain had damped the cap (it was before the day of breech-loaders), and it missed fire. My sensation at the moment may be imagined, but it was fortunately as short-lived as the snake; for the other barrel, fired instantly, took the brute's head off, and I was safe. When brought to camp, the headless trunk was found to measure over six

feet in length, while its thickness in the middle was about that of my forearm.

Although the encounter has taken so long to describe, all that occurred between the Indian's cry and the fatal shot probably did not occupy more than two or three seconds, yet the impression created has remained vivid to this day, and as long as I live I shall never forget the eyes of the creature as they gleamed in the twilight. Those of other animals when angry convey the idea of heat, while these seemed cold beyond expression, and long after haunted me in dreams. The snake in question is regarded as the most deadly of those which inhabit the Guiana forest, and had he struck me on the bare thigh which was nearest to its head, these memoirs would never have been written, for I should probably have been dead within half an hour.

Except as regards the low hum of insects, other life than that of the vegetable world was, in creek journeys, not visibly or audibly abundant. Early in the morning there was now and then a flight and much chattering of parrots, which afforded some sport for the gun and very tolerable soup for the pot. Only at the time when wood-ants were taking wing and clouds of them were rising above the trees, there would be seen high up a number of large swallow-tailed birds sailing round and round in graceful circles and presumably in the act of taking prey.[1] Of smaller creatures, sometimes a great blue butterfly would rise over the trees, flashing his silvern underwings in the sunlight, or a buzzing as of an exaggerated bumble-bee, and a gleam of iridescence near at hand would betray the presence of a humming-bird passing from flower to flower and probing each as he fluttered over it. In midday, as in the main stream, there was silence broken only now and then by the shrill note of the pi-pi-yo, and rendered not less evident by the low

[1] I once shot a specimen of these birds, and in so far as I remember identified it as an insect-eating eagle, which has sometimes been seen in Europe.

whirring of grasshoppers and the constant hum of other insects.

When passing the night in this lower part of the district, I was often startled by a weird, shrill sound close to my hammock, much resembling "Who are you?" pronounced very quickly, this being the onomatopœic name given to a species of goatsucker by the English-speaking natives. Further up the river a large goatsucker, mentioned also by Waterton, makes itself heard early in the night, though I cannot say I was ever able to recognise the sound attributed to him of "Work, work-away," or "Willie-come-go." There is, however, another bird of the same species, which, though I never saw him, I should judge from the extreme loudness of his note to be larger still. This sound is one of the most beautiful, and by far the most melancholy, of any within my experience proceeding from a bird or any other animal. I heard it only in the depths of the forest, and after nightfall. It consists of four notes in a regularly descending scale, separated one from the other by a short interval. Other goatsuckers convey by their cries the idea of wailing; but this particular one does so to such a degree as almost to affect the spirits. In fact, it gives the impression of a lost soul mourning its unhappy fate. It may be mentioned here that, except about an hour before daybreak, when the gallinaceous birds begin to crow, most of the cries emitted at night by the inhabitants of the forest, of larger size than frogs, are very far from exhilarating, and would seem to indicate distress.

CHAPTER IV

Another path from Demerara to Essequebo—Indian mode of marking route traversed—Lost in the forest—Upper Essequebo—Kaieteur Falls unknown—Mythical settlements of women—Bird's-eye view of forest country—Electric eel as source of amusement—Canaimas, and the fear of them—Indian drinking-bouts—Curious custom connected with child-birth—Cassava the Indian's principal food—Dangerously poisonous when uncooked—Guiana no country for the sportsman—Peccaries—Supposed trap set for them by boa-constrictor—Huge size of the latter—Toucans—The blow-pipe—Wourali poison.

FROM the Demerara to the Essequebo, by the path which reaches the former river between the first rapids and the Great Falls, is a march of six to eight hours, the longer time being required in the wet season; but the path between the two rivers principally used by me, and always on my longer journeys, was one about two days' paddle above the Great Falls. This was too long for a single march, and involved camping once or twice *en route* in the heart of the forest. The characteristics of both paths were much the same, and, except as regards length, the description of one would almost equally apply to the other. Neither was really a path in the ordinary sense of the word. The upper one, indeed, was trodden by human feet, and this only by the Indians of the far interior, not probably more than two or three times a year. Consequently, to the untrained eye, no track was to be seen, and the only visible mark of the route to be taken was that furnished by saplings, broken and turned down for the purpose by the passing Indian. By this device the light colour of the under leaves, invisible when the plant is erect, at once catches the eye, and serves as a valuable guide. The quickness with which the operation is performed, and the strength

of wrist it demands are remarkable. In an instant, without slackening his gait at all, the man will break a growing stick, a quarter of an inch thick, and double it down so that the broken top will hang down the stem. The habit of doing this is so ingrained in the Indian that he indulges in it mechanically and unconsciously when other broken saplings in the neighbourhood render it unnecessary. If he failed to keep up the practice thus, he might neglect it when it is all-important. But for such landmarks in the excitement of hunting, he would certainly lose himself in the forest; and I have more than once had occasion to bless them, when, by accident, I have been left alone to find my way to camp. For want of this precaution I once had a most disagreeable experience, which might easily have ended disastrously, though it was in the immediate neighbourhood of civilised dwellings.

Being at the penal settlement on the Massaruni, subsequently described, I went out early in the morning with a companion for a short walk in the forest. In half an hour we turned round towards home, but after going a much longer distance than that of our outward stroll, and finding that our position was still quite unrecognisable, we were in a dilemma. We had, unfortunately, no compass with us, and the sun was, as usual in the forest, entirely invisible; but a single glimpse of the sky to show its direction would enable us to make for the river, and thus find our way. After a long search we found a fallen tree, the gap made by which, though nearly filled up by the surrounding foliage, was still sufficiently large for the purpose. At length we reached the river, but were not, in a double sense, "out of the wood." It turned out we were several miles from the settlement, and in order to keep touch with the stream, we had to proceed nearly in a straight line, forcing ourselves through swamps and over all other obstacles. Fortunately we had cutlasses with us, or we should never have reached home before night. Even so, it was late when we arrived,

exhausted with heat, hunger, and fatigue, with our clothes and skin lacerated with the razor-grass, and altogether in a pitiable condition. That we must have traversed a considerable distance was shown by the fact that the convicts had been sent in all directions for some miles round, and though continually yelling, were not heard by us until our trouble was nearly over.

Of the Upper Essequebo I can remember little beyond general impressions, as except at the ends of the paths from the Demerara I never stopped more than once at any particular place. It has always been a matter of deep regret to me that I never saw the Kaieteur Falls, discovered by Mr. Barrington Brown during his geological survey, shortly after I left the colony. Oddly enough, I never heard of these falls from the Indians, from whom I received accounts, true or imaginary, of many natural objects in the country; for on more than one occasion I passed the mouth of the Potaro, from which that natural wonder is distant only two or three days' journey. As neither Schomburg nor Waterton saw these falls, I incline to think there must have been some superstitious reluctance on the part of the natives to mention them to strangers. Another subject of regret is that I never reached the site of the fabled city of Manoa, nor the wonderful mountain plateau of Roraima, probably unique as regards the great area practically cut off from the rest of the world by lofty, perpendicular, and almost unscalable cliffs. Illness, accidents, delays in rapids, and once a sudden call to the lower part of my district, always shortened the time at my disposal, and so my cherished intention to see these places was never fulfilled.

Roraima was first mentioned to me by the Indians as the site of a wonderful settlement of women, who admitted men to their society only once a year. As a similar account, with equally curious details not to be mentioned here, was given me at other times, the locality described being always different, I began at length to regard the story as a survival of the ancient myth of the Amazons. Once, however,

a Macusi strenuously asserted to me that he had been one of the visitors of a community of this kind, which lived in this case on one of the rivers falling into the Essequebo above the Repununi. His account was full of such minute particulars of the severe, and by no means altogether pleasant, ordeal which he had had to undergo that I scarcely believed them to be all imaginary, especially as he offered to take me to the place. But as the month in which alone he would venture to approach these formidable ladies was one when, owing to the rain, it was specially difficult to ascend the river, I never had an opportunity of satisfying my curiosity as to whether there was not some slight foundation for his story. I may mention that Mr. McClintock, for many years Superintendent of Rivers and Creeks in the extreme west of the colony, and whose knowledge of Indians was unsurpassed among white men, subsequently informed me that he did not altogether disbelieve the story, as a similar settlement of women had once appeared on the Pomeroon, but had left after only a few months' residence.

Of the mountains of Guiana I had only distant views, but the ascent of hills, which I should say never exceeded 2,000 feet, cost far more labour than would ordinarily be required elsewhere for mountains several times higher. One experience of this kind in the neighbourhood of the Demerara I have special reason to remember on this account. For some five or six hundred yards before reaching the summit the gradient was so precipitous that I was forced to seize a sapling or liane almost at every step for the purpose of dragging myself up the next one. Each time the support gave way, I had an unpleasant fall, which, but for the abundance of vegetation enabling me to arrest descent, would have been dangerous.

From the top of this hill, which was the highest ground I ever ascended in Guiana, the view was a remarkable one. Except a glimpse of water here and there, probably bends in rivers, the whole area beneath was covered with a dense

mass of foliage. The tops of the trees had almost the effect of a huge, undulating grass plot, with a bush rising out of it here and there, indicating the position of some specially huge giant.

On my longer journeys I was always accompanied by Indians. While marching they were usually silent, the forest seeming to affect them with its gloom.[1] But during the early hours of the night, especially if we had reached a river, they were continually talking and laughing, busily relating grotesque stories of their hunting adventures,[2] and sometimes, I suspect, making merry over the peculiarities of the white man. The seemingly utter indifference to the presence of strangers which is ordinarily shown by Indians coming from the interior—probably the product of mingled shyness and pride—entirely wears off on closer acquaintance, and they exhibit the utmost curiosity about the white man and all belonging to him. All awe quickly disappears when they are kindly treated, yet I recall one instance when it was suddenly revived in a ludicrous manner.

My camp being on the bank of the Essequebo, I was, as usual early in the morning, about to bathe. I had just passed beyond the edge of the water, when there came a sharp, warning cry from an Indian. Following with my eye the direction of his finger, I saw, a few feet in front of me, what seemed like a snake moving slowly in the shallow water. An arrow, shot at a range of only two or three yards, quickly pierced the creature, which, by means of the attached string, was forthwith hauled on shore, and proved to be an electric eel, some four or five feet in length; so that I had had a narrow escape. When it had been some time on land, and had, therefore, lost much of its danger-

[1] Only those who have experienced this gloom can fully appreciate an illustration of one of Mr. Stanley's books of African travel, and the delight at emerging from the forest, which is shown in the special liveliness of the gait of the long line of porters.

[2] A particularly "creepy" one I still remember. The man told how, when he was intently engaged in following a herd of peccari, he suddenly discovered that he was himself being stalked by a jaguar.

ous power, I touched it with a cutlass, receiving a severe shock. It then occurred to me, as I had suffered no unpleasant effect beyond the momentary sensation, that the curious power of the creature was still sufficient to afford amusement to a somewhat jaded party. Accordingly, I caused the Indians to join hands, and giving a cutlass to the foremost, made him touch the eel with the point. At the moment of contact he threw the cutlass violently down, and the whole row of five or six men got a shock which produced at first consternation, followed by intense amusement when they found no harm was done. In order to increase their astonishment, I took a piece of wood about two inches long and pressed it upon the creature's skin. When the Indians saw that this had no effect on me, they were easily induced to repeat their first experiment with the cutlass. The result being, naturally, much the same as before, they regarded me with deep respect, and, I afterwards learnt, as something of a "pe-i" (or medicine-man). I may add that the vitality of this eel was remarkable, as even after several hours on land it could still make its power very sensibly felt.

Occasionally, on the upper waters both of the Essequebo and Demerara, I met a single, haggard, unkempt, and strangely painted Indian, paddling himself silently downstream, and usually close under the bank. Such men were, I was informed, Canaimas, who were under an inherited obligation, considered by them as sacred, to revenge upon one or more of the family of the offender some wrong perpetrated, perhaps, long ago—an obligation, in fact, very similar to that of the Corsican vendetta. They paid attention to a signal only by paddling away faster than before, and even if I had thought it of any use to follow them, it was doubtful if any of my Indians would have consented to do so; always evincing a strange fear, even of talking about these supposed murderous devotees. From all I could gather, a Canaima usually came from a distance, and, being always a young man, who had undertaken his task imme-

diately on arriving at manhood, had, consequently, never been seen in the neighbourhood where his design was to be accomplished. Except when unavoidably travelling on the water, he remained concealed in the bush, and would remain in hiding for long periods, awaiting a favourable opportunity. The victim, at length taken unawares, would be clubbed, and, while insensible, would be subjected to a horrible operation for prolonging his torture. I was never able to verify such stories; but it is not improbable that sudden deaths, of which I sometimes heard months after their occurrence, may have been so caused. In a thinly populated country, so large in extent and so difficult to traverse, with a climate productive of exceedingly rapid decomposition, it is obvious that the chances would be infinite against the capture and conviction of the criminal.

It will thus be understood why the natives of by far the greater part of the interior of Guiana, though nominally British subjects, are practically amenable to no other law than their own.[1]

Of other unpleasant customs of the Guiana natives, their drinking-bouts most commonly attract the stranger's attention. They have at least two intoxicating drinks—one "piwari," produced from the cassava (manioc), the other "caseeri," from the sweet potato, both made in the disgusting manner which I have seen practised by the South Sea Islanders in the making of kava (the Fijian "yaghona"), namely, by chewing the root[2] into a pulp, which, when mixed

[1] It always struck me as curious that the Canaima should make himself conspicuous by painting and otherwise, and thus advertise his deadly mission, the success of which depended on secrecy. This point I never had cleared up, and I can only suppose that while to render himself thus hideous was for some reason obligatory, he obviated the effects of the exposure by never allowing to be seen the place where he slept. As a matter of fact I never saw a Canaima except in the act of paddling on a river, which he was obliged to use for making a journey of any great length, and I am inclined to think that the other natives were in too great awe of his mysterious and unknown errand to think of following him.

[2] In the case of piwari, it is not the raw root, but the bread made from the root which is chewed.

with water, produces the necessary fermentation. When a canoe has been filled with the drink, the guests assemble, join hands, and walk sideways round it, chanting at the same time what, no doubt, they regard as a convivial song, but which is more like a dirge. It consists entirely of two notes in the minor key, the higher one coming first and the lower one occasionally long drawn out—"Ay—ah, ay—ah, ay-a-a-ah." Now and then the chain is broken and two or more dip calabashes (gourds cut in half) into the canoe, and having drunk the contents at one draught, complete the circle again, the droning chant continuing sometimes for twenty-four hours and more until the liquor is finished, all the performers, however—women as well as men—being, before the end, very drunk indeed.

Curiously enough, the effect of these liquids seems to be exactly the reverse of that produced by the Polynesian kava. For while the latter renders the legs useless, the head still remaining clear, the former never seems to preclude an upright posture, even when all other signs of intoxication, even the most disgusting, are only too evident. Thus when anyone chooses to leave the circle for a time he has no difficulty in returning, and is at once admitted again. One presumes that there must be some pleasure in these orgies, or indulgence in them would not be so frequent, but it is difficult to understand in what it consists. The hilarity of which the Indians—the Accawoios and Macusis especially—are so capable is entirely absent. The faces of all are funereal in expression, even from the first, while the subsequent sickness one would think destructive of all other agreeable sensations. But whatever pleasures these revels may afford to the participants, to one sleeping in the neighbourhood and compelled to listen hour after hour to the melancholy tones they become at last intolerable. In fact, once when I was ill they affected my nerves to such an extent that, though it was the rainy season, I preferred to take my hammock out of shelter into the neighbouring forest.

Arawaks, who inhabit the creeks near the coast (and were thus at an early period brought into contact with the Dutch and used by them to catch escaped slaves), seemed to be as fond of these drinking-bouts as the more unsophisticated natives, though the sparseness and small size of their settlements, which rarely exceed a single dwelling, rendered prolonged orgies on their part of less frequent occurrence. In fact, in mode of life and habits all the natives of Guiana—not excluding the so-called tree-inhabiting Waraus—were much alike, the Arawak differing from the Indian of the interior merely, as far as I could see, in wearing more clothes, having a slightly paler skin and a somewhat superior intelligence, with greater gravity of demeanour. This gravity seemed imperturbable. I do not think I ever saw an Arowak smile, and I am sure I never heard one laugh.

One peculiar custom of the interior natives has, I think, been abandoned by the Arawaks. Arriving once at a settlement, I asked why the father of the family, who seemed quite well, did not get up to receive us, but remained lying in his hammock. Mr. Couchman, who was with me, informed me that this was because his wife had just been delivered of a child. She, poor woman, naturally not looking very happy, was busy with her work, paying only very occasional attention to the squalling infant, and evidently with no intention of lying down. The husband was being treated exactly as if he was the invalid, and I was told would continue recumbent for several days lest any accident happening to him should affect the child. During this vicarious illness, moreover, the man was forbidden certain meats, for fear that the qualities of the animal from which it came would attach to the child. Venison, for instance, being tabooed in fear of its causing timidity, and the flesh of other animals for similar reasons. The natives themselves are very uncommunicative on the subject of this custom, being apparently ashamed of it.

The principal food of the natives, and also of myself

when far away from town, was bread made from cassava (manioc). This, when carefully made, is excellent in taste as well as most nutritious, and as it is superior in both of these respects to oat-cake, I have often wondered that it is not better known in Europe. If Professor Crookes' prognostication should prove correct as to the coming failure of the world's wheat crop to supply the ever-growing population, I apprehend that some day both this and plantain flour will largely enter into the consumption of non-tropical countries.

The poisonous quality of the bitter variety of cassava when in its natural state, and the mode of its preparation, are well known. But a peculiarity of the pressed juice before boiling, which I have never seen mentioned, is its attractiveness to animals. The natural instinct which ordinarily distinguishes the nutritious from the harmful seems in this case to be wanting, for it is generally believed in Guiana that all four-footed beasts have a liking for it. At all events, cattle and goats drink it greedily, even when abundance of water is within easy reach, and a knowledge of this furnishes an easy and safe means of killing stock to anyone having a grudge against its owner. In more than one instance I had little doubt that the destruction of a woodcutter's cattle had been maliciously caused in this way; but unhappily it proved impossible to bring the offence home with sufficient certainty for a conviction.

For sport the forest of Guiana cannot be recommended. To get near any game is a matter of extreme difficulty, and to see it, even when close at hand, is scarcely more easy, owing to insufficiency of light. Presumably, because the Indian hunter has left them no peace in the past, all the wild quadrupeds, from the jaguar to the accouri (the agouti of the Spaniards), fly before the approach of men, which must be stealthy indeed to give the chance of a shot. As far as I could learn, the only exceptions to this rule are one of the varieties of peccari and the Waracaba tiger, the latter, in my time at all events, unknown to naturalists.

Peccaries are always in herds. The largest and smallest variety are said to be comparatively timid, and therefore less dangerous, unless actually brought to bay; but those of the middle size, or about that of a three-quarters grown Berkshire pig, were frequently described as being very awkward customers indeed. The Indians told me that when they came across any they at once ran to the nearest climbable tree, and one described to me that he had, after climbing, been kept aloft for many hours until a jaguar put the herd to flight. Though I often walked for many hours in search of larger game, sometimes going long distances in their track, I am not absolutely certain that I ever saw any in the forest. As regards the last-mentioned variety of peccaries, my failure was perhaps fortunate, as a single gun would have been useless against such a number, and, as weighing some fourteen stone I was never very active in tree-climbing, I should probably have come off very badly in the encounter.

Camoodies grow to an enormous size in the colony. A planter told me of one killed on the west coast, which had measured forty feet in length, and I recollect seeing many years ago, in a book by Stedman on Dutch Guiana, a picture—largely, I should say, imaginative—of a huge monster hanging from a tree, with two slaves swarming up the carcase while in the act of skinning it! Twice only did I get a sight of these creatures. Once, while on shore at a negro's plantation about fifteen miles from Georgetown, I saw, what was of no uncommon occurrence, a porpoise floating down rapidly with the tide, and at short intervals coming to the surface. In this case, however, it had been caught by a big snake, in all probability a water camoodie, whose coils were plainly visible for the two or three minutes during which the object remained in sight. On another occasion, when travelling with Sir William Holmes (then Provost-Marshal of the colony) on the River Waini, towards the western extremity of the colony, we, while going down the stream as fast as oars would carry

us, passed quite close to a floating island, a disgusting smell from which would, even without sight of them, have made evident the presence of snakes. Two of these monsters were lying upon the grass coiled up in separate heaps. Four barrels were quickly fired at short range, which caused the creatures to move; but the pace we were going prevented us from seeing any other effect, and they were quickly beyond our sight.

As regards shooting, a considerable number of parrots might sometimes be obtained early in the morning on the river or in clearings of the forest, and now and then, sitting on the tent of my boat, I had a chance of bringing down a toucan while crossing the river high up above the trees. The latter have a curious flight, unlike that of any other bird. They seem unable to carry their large beak on a level plane, and their movement is one of constant curve, ascending and descending. For the same reason, probably, they are very easily shot, and fall at once if struck by only a single pellet. Other birds, such as "powie" (curassow), maams, etc., were only obtained by "pot shots" when sitting in the trees, and even if I had cared for such shooting, I should have had but little success, as again and again I failed to see a bird, even after looking hard at the place where it was sitting, until my Indian killed it.

The instrument ordinarily used by the Indians for killing game was a cheap "Brummagem" gun; but when they did not possess one, the home-made bow and arrow served them fairly well. For small game, sitting on the ground or on second-growth timber, they took a blow-pipe. The effective use of the latter weapon I found by no means difficult after very little practice. Though it is impossible, of course, to take aim along it as with a gun, the eye seems instinctively to point the tube straight to the object. I have seen a complete tyro hit an orange at ten to fifteen yards' distance after very few attempts. Both arrows and blow-pipe darts for shooting game are poisoned with wourali, which, when fresh, will cause a powie or monkey to drop

to the ground in a few seconds. This preparation being almost, if not entirely, identical with the curare of Brazil (though its makers in Guiana pretend that the vegetable juice which produces its potent effect is mixed with virus from snakes, tarantulas, and manourie ants), has been too often described to need extended reference here; but I may mention, from my own experience, that arrows so poisoned lose their peculiar efficacy very rapidly, and I have seen a hen walking about picking up grains with complete indifference, though she had sticking in her several blow-pipe darts, one of which had instantly paralysed another only a few weeks before. Probably the strength might be preserved if the paste were kept air-tight, but this I never had the opportunity of trying.

CHAPTER V

Deer-shooting from canoe—Jaguars—The Warracaba tiger—Night sounds of the forest—The kinkajou—Appalling roar of howling monkey—The houtou and his tail-trimming—Onomatopœic names—Cushi ants—Jager ants and their service to man—Night invasion of Jagers—Tenacity of life in ants—Termites—Their extraordinary voracity—Ant intercommunication—Killing a monkey, and its effect on the killer—Burning of a hollow tree.

AS regards larger game in Guiana, the only kind the shooting of which ever afforded me sport in the English sense of the word was the deer, which is about the size of the fallow-deer, but with short, unbranching horns. I usually took with me two woodskins, myself and an Indian in one, and in the other two Indians with a dog. Arriving at what seemed a likely place, one of the Indians went ashore with the dog. With him he carried a horn made out of a hollow gourd, which, when blown in these solitudes, was audible for miles. From time to time he would thus indicate his whereabouts, and so enable us to keep as near him as possible on the river. After we had paddled an hour or two following the direction of the sound, the horn, if we were to be lucky, would emit a different note, indicating that game had been found. Presently the barking of the dog would be heard, faintly at first, and becoming gradually louder as it approached the water, for which the hunted deer invariably makes. Sometimes the sound would become suddenly very loud at a considerable distance from us up or down stream, and then began a frantic paddling in order to reach the spot in time. The deer would then be seen entering the water, or sometimes only the splash would be heard, and the animal would first become visible when actually swimming. The

paddling would now become still more frantic, until the deer was close to the other bank. A few seconds more, and unless stopped by a bullet he would be safe in the forest, at all events for that day. Paddle is breathlessly exchanged for rifle, and crack! crack! echoes over the water just as the quarry has topped the bank. Has the animal fallen, or has he escaped? Once or twice it was the latter, involving a lost day, the miss due, as I flattered myself, to a hand shaking from violent exertion; but after some experience such failures were rare. I did not carry a second Indian to relieve me of all work, partly because my dead weight would have diminished speed, and also because without the violent exercise the excitement would have been far less.

The tapir and the labba (the lap of Trinidad) may be shot by the same method, but do not afford by any means so exciting a run.

Jaguars were sometimes heard near our camp at night, but only on two occasions did I see one. The puma (which, I suppose, is the brown tiger, specially feared by the Indians) and all the smaller cats, including the Waracaba, which the natives dread more than any other animal, also eluded me. These creatures are said to be about the size of pointer dogs, and are never met with except in large packs (for which reason I imagine them to be rather canine than feline). When they are heard approaching, safety is only to be obtained by getting on the other side of the stream, which they will rarely or never cross. Once when camped by the side of a burn in the forest I heard strange cries which seemed to proceed from a great number of animals. My Indians, very frightened, began to take down their hammocks, calling out, "Waracaba! Waracaba!" But the sounds gradually died away and we were able to sleep in peace. Possibly the stream saved us; at all events, I never saw the animals so as to be able to verify whence the sounds proceeded. In my time the existence of this gregarious tiger was, I believe, much doubted by naturalists;

but the subsequent narrative of Mr. Brown, the discoverer of the Kaieteur Falls, serves to confirm the Indian stories about these animals, though, like myself, he never actually saw one.

Night in the forest has many other strange sounds, most of which, however, quickly become familiar and are easily recognisable. At dusk, in the neighbourhood of a river or other opening, is heard, almost exactly at the hour from which its name is derived, the shrill burr of "the six-o'clock bee." In reality, it is a small cicada under two inches in length, and yet its note is so loud as to be audible over water at a distance of at least one third of a mile. At the same time begins the croaking of a great variety of frogs, one, called by the Creoles the paddle frog, giving out a sound so extremely like that of an approaching boat that I more than once could scarcely believe it anything else. Later the more subdued chirruping of tree frogs becomes incessant, and now and then in the depth of the forest one is suddenly startled by the hoarse staccato grunt of the bull-frog, sounding from some hollow trunk close by. Then there are the notes of the various goatsuckers; and about midnight the inexpressibly melancholy, yet melodious wail of the largest one above referred to. Once only I heard the low yap of an animal moving in the trees above my head. It was, I was told, the night-prowling kinkajou.[1]

But of all the night sounds of the forest, that of the howling monkeys is unquestionably the loudest. To a stranger it is really appalling and may be heard for miles. One or two man-of-war sirens and half a dozen angry bulls bellowing in unison, would be required to produce music equally

[1] This animal also inhabits the island of Trinidad, and one of them subsequently caused myself and my family a very unpleasant experience. Years after my departure from Guiana, when I was administering the government of the colony in question, and sleeping in Government House, the household was awakened in the middle of the night by the agonised screaming of a wild parrot in a treetop close at hand. This continued for fully a quarter of an hour, growing fainter and fainter until it died away. In the morning the partly devoured remains of a green parrot were found at the foot of the tree—the victim of the kinkajou.

loud and melodious. According to the natives, the creatures roar thus while hanging upon branches by their tails, and swinging backwards and forwards.

The approach of day is always announced by different gallinaceous and other birds, and by degrees I came to know the time from them with considerable exactness. An hour before the first sign of dawn, or about half-past four o'clock, is heard several times repeated the crow which gives its name to the small partridge called "Doura-quarra." Half an hour later comes the short whistle of the maam (tinamou), a bird also resembling a partridge but much larger; and finally, actual daybreak is announced by the hannaqua, the so-called pheasant of the country, though extremely unlike one. Also, in the early morning, but not so regularly, is heard the sad note of the houtou, called elsewhere, I believe, the motmot, a bird which has the curious propensity of biting off a part of its tail. I would observe that the picture of this bird, given in the explanatory index of Mr. Wood's edition of Waterton, is unlike the specimens which I saw in Guiana, and evidently is that of a distinct species. The birds seen by me had the vanes of the long tail-feathers bitten off for an inch or more exactly at the point which, when the tail was doubled back, would be reached by the beak, the end of the tail, unlike that in the illustration referred to, being of much the same size as the part above the gap. The Indians believe that this bird has the habit of thrusting his tail into bees' nests, and that the gap in the tail-vanes is caused by the wearing process of eating off the honey. In this way they accounted for the fact that some sticky substance was adhering to the end of the tail of a specimen obtained by me.

All these names, with most of those given by Indians to birds and animals, are so strictly onomatopœic that, when locally pronounced, it would be scarcely possible for the human voice to approach more closely the sounds intended to be imitated. The many varieties of parrots are all, I think, named on the same principle, as kissi-kissi, hia-hia, toa-toa, and many others.

As regards other inhabitants of the forest, the cushi, or leaf-carrying ants, already referred to, can hardly escape notice, even in a short walk. Their going and returning legions, always close to one another, and together making a solid column several inches wide, are so numerous that it would be difficult to go many miles in any direction without meeting them. These ants are most destructive of useful vegetation and are regarded simply as a pest; but there is in Guiana one species of ant which is really serviceable to mankind. I refer to the jagers, or hunting ants.

At night, when an inmate of a woodcutter's house or an Indian hut is asleep, sharp bites in various parts of his body cause him to spring up and strike a light. He finds that hundreds of jager ants have marched down the ropes of his hammock. Looking on the ground, on the posts supporting the roof, on the rafters, and on the thatch, he sees countless legions of the same insects covering all, and a dense column still pouring in. Cockroaches in abundance are now seen rushing about the thatch and occasionally falling to the ground. If examined closely, these are found to have several ants fastened on to them. The fall attracts the ants on the ground, which immediately close round the struggling victim, and in the course of a few seconds he is being borne off on a line parallel with the legions still entering. Scores of cockroaches are thus dealt with, and now and then a great centipede shares the same fate. Falling from the roof, he writhes for a moment on the ground, apparently endeavouring to free himself from his clinging enemies; but that moment is fatal. Hundreds rush upon him from all sides, and in less than a minute he also is borne off, though still alive, and sufficiently strong to give his carriers a very unpleasant time with his contortions. Occasionally a gecko lizard comes scampering down a post, and though he gets away for a moment, it is doubtful whether he will escape altogether; for there may be sufficient ants upon him to ensure a fate scarcely less rapid than that of the cockroaches. After an hour or two occu-

pied in searching every nook and cranny, the ants depart as suddenly as they came, and nothing more is seen of them perhaps for many months. They have, however, left the place completely cleared of all insects and vermin, even of rats, which, if not destroyed, are at least driven away, so that however disagreeable for the moment, they have really done a most useful service. Meat requires to be protected from these ants by an impermeable covering, or they quickly tear it to pieces; and their attacks upon people asleep render it probable that, if unable to move, one would quickly meet a horrible fate.

Other ants which are familiar objects are the black manouri, about an inch in length, and the diminutive red ant, which, relatively to his size, is quite as venomous. The former resembles a long, wingless, black wasp, and, like the latter, uses his mouth to hold his prey, while he stings with his tail. His venom is so powerful as invariably to give fever, and it is therefore not improbably true, what I was told, that even a single sting has been known to cause death. Fortunately I never was stung by a manouri, but the red ants once caused me a most unpleasant experience. Coming out of the water after bathing, I inadvertently sat down in a nest of them. My Indians laughed, and I do not doubt I furnished a sufficiently amusing spectacle, but the incident was no joke to me. For several hours I suffered severe pain, as if red pepper had been rubbed into numerous pin-pricks, and fever followed which I did not get rid of for two days.

Ants of several different kinds have their home in orchids, and I do not think I ever procured one of these plants without finding in it a numerous colony. On one occasion, when a large cattleya had been obtained, together with the elbow of a branch on which it was growing, the ants were so numerous and venomous that I caused both them and their home to be thrown into the water and dragged behind my boat, using a stick frequently for the purpose of keeping the whole under the surface. For hours

afterwards ants were coming up and floating away, until they appeared to be all gone; but when the log was taken up the next day several others astonished us by running out apparently quite uninjured. Either, therefore, they must have been able to survive without air, or sufficient for them had remained in the many cavities of the plant.

Even more noticeable in the forest than any of the above are the wood-ants. In most other parts of the world they are called "white ants," though they are never white, and are not ants, but termites, which belong to an entirely different order of insect. As one passes through openings in the forest, and especially along the river, one cannot help being struck with a great number of trees completely bare of foliage, but still standing erect as ever and with naked branches sharply outlined against the sky. On many of these will be noticed, high up, what are seemingly huge excrescences, most of them looking in shape like enormous footballs. These are nests of the wood-ant, and an examination of the trunk shows the covered passages leading to them. These bare trees could hardly have all been killed by lightning, as commonly supposed by the natives. Yet death had certainly come neither from strangulation by lianes, of which there was never any sign, nor from the ordinary decay of old age; so that possibly there was some connection between the condition of the trees and the residence of the termites whose local name betokens their fondness for wood. But, though wood is probably the principal food of these creatures, they seem to be almost as omnivorous as the cockroach; for on one of my passages from the Demerara to the Essequebo, when accompanied by Captain (afterwards Colonel) Morley, of the Buffs, we left two umbrellas and some pairs of boots on the bank of the Demerara to await our return. After an interval of only a few days we found of the former nothing but the frames, while the latter were simply skeletons, the seams only being left, the cobbler's wax having proved distasteful. The destroyers had evidently finished their repast, as there were none visible on the spot.

What a mysterious faculty of communication have ants! Once, lying in a hammock close to the floor in the covered verandah of my house in Georgetown, I observed an ant which, after discovering a large piece of sponge cake, immediately scampered over it in apparent excitement, and then went off without taking any away. As the ant was one of those with a special liking for sweet food, this proceeding was so strange that I resolved to observe the further action of the creature. I was at the time weak from fever; but I managed to crawl to the other end of the verandah, a distance of some ten yards, where I saw the ant make for a hole in an interstice between the boards. In less than two seconds ants began to pour out of the hole in great numbers, and all went in a straight line to the cake, which in the course of an hour was all carried off. No doubt, though indistinguishable from the others, the discoverer had led the column; but the question arises, How did he so instantaneously communicate his discovery? Was it by sound inaudible to human ears, or by a touch which permeated in a moment the dense mass of his fellows like a shock of electricity?

The Indians are by no means averse to the flesh of monkeys, and indeed at one time I myself found it by no means intolerable when other food was scarce. In Guiana, however, no kind of monkey is easy to shoot, as they are rarely to be seen except on the tops of the trees. When there, I found them too difficult to hit, as they were only visible for an instant when moving rapidly, while loose shot even of large size would not bring them down from such a height. However, having one day fired with an Eley's green cartridge, there fell down a large one of the spider variety. To my horror I saw that a young one, clinging to her, had fallen also, though apparently it had not been touched by the shot. The piteous and almost human look of the mother when dying was such as I shall never forget. I felt like a murderer, and from that day I never killed another monkey. Nor, however hungry, did I ever

consciously eat one again. But as in pepper-pot all meat, after a day or two, tastes much alike, I cannot say that I may not have done so unconsciously.

The burning of hollow trees close to our camp was a favourite amusement of Indians. Once when I permitted mine to indulge in it, the spectacle presented was a grand one. The hollow trunk made a tremendous draught, and the fire running up in it quickly a great mass of flame poured out from the lofty top with a roar like that of an enormous blast furnace. Showers of sparks rose in the air, as though hundreds of Roman candles were being fired together, with the difference, however, that this pyrotechnic display and its accompanying noise lasted for several hours and precluded sleep until long after midnight. However wonderful the sight, I cannot say that on reflection I contemplated it with unmixed satisfaction. It is certain that with the dead tree must have been destroyed a vast number of living creatures, including frogs, ants, many kinds of insects, bats, and probably owls. Even at the risk, then, of being regarded as a sentimentalist, I could not on this account regard tree-burning as justifiable when done for mere amusement, and it was not repeated.

CHAPTER VI

Inspection of Massaruni penal settlement—The Lower Essequebo—The coco-nut palm and its taste for salt—Sound of tropical rain in forest heard at great distance—Sanitary benefit of bare feet—Capon sitting on eggs—Scenery of Essequebo above rapids—Adventure in ascending rapid—A rash swim—Jiggers and their extraction—Scarcity of animal life in Upper Essequebo—Kingfishers and jacamars—Fireflies of different varieties—Mosquitoes and gallinippers; story illustrating difference between them—River Waini—The balata tree and its gum—Water communication between Pomeroon and Upper Orinoco—Deserted missionary settlement—Experience with bats.

AMONG the duties of magistrates in British Guiana was the inspection of the penal settlement,[1] which was made each month by two public officers specially appointed for the purpose. It was situated on the Massaruni River, near the mouth, and near also the junction of that and another great river, the Cuyuni, with the still greater River Essequebo. The journey was usually made in one of the colonial steamers from Georgetown, along the west coast of Demerara as far as the mouth of the Essequebo, and then some sixty miles up that river. On the passage up are several islands, some of them a mile or more in length, that near the junction of the three rivers being Kykoveral, which was one of the principal settlements of the Dutch (recently, I understand, used for a leper asylum). Besides the real islands one is certain to meet a large number of so-called floating islands, which are commonly seen also in the Demerara, though in less numbers. These are composed of great masses of growing grass, which, having spread from the river-bank, have been torn away when the

[1] This settlement was a prison for persons convicted in the colony and sentenced to penal servitude.

water has risen to an unusual height. Once let loose, they float up and down with the tide, and as the ebb, assisted by the stream, is of course the stronger, they eventually are carried into the sea, though sometimes occupying many days in getting there. I have occasionally seen small trees growing on these islands, so it is evident that there was soil on them, which must have lodged there before the supporting grass became detached from the land. Population on the Essequebo was in my time still more sparse than on the Demerara; and probably seemed even less numerous than it was owing to the practice of concealing residences from view with a mass of foliage in front. To one passing up the centre of the river the banks appear to present an almost unbroken line of forest; and it is only on nearer approach that one saw here and there a narrow boat channel and one or two coco-nut palms, indicating the existence of a house at the back.

The mention of the coco-nut palm reminds me of a peculiarity of this tree, which though probably familiar to naturalists, I have found to be by no means generally known to others. I refer to its extreme liking for salt. According to my somewhat varied and extended experience in the Southern and Eastern Oceans, as well as in the West Indies, this tree naturally bears well only in the immediate neighbourhood of the sea, and the quantity of fruit steadily diminishes with distance inland. I have occasionally seen one or two nuts on a tree near water which is now and then brackish; but at a distance of only a few miles from salt water these palms, though often appearing healthy and well grown, were all, except in one instance, absolutely barren. The exception was noticed by me on the Demerara, and when I remarked on the unusual circumstance, the proprietor informed me that he produced a crop on the tree in question by artificial means. Whenever he finished a barrel of salt fish or pork, he poured the whole of the brine on the roots. He did not consume enough salt provisions for the service of more

than one tree, so that the others, of which there were several, all remained barren.

The Massaruni penal settlement has often been described by travellers. A day or two before I arrived on one occasion a monster herd of peccaries, in attempting to cross the river, was attacked and hundreds killed by the occupants of boats collected from all directions. It may be imagined how formidable would be the meeting of such a crowd in the forest.

The large expanse of water in front of the settlement gave me more than once an opportunity of observing at how great a distance one can hear the sound of equatorial rain falling in the forest. One heard the dull roar for over five minutes before the effect of the rain became visible, by falling into the water at the further bank of the Essequebo, some two miles away. As the storm then took over ten minutes more to reach the settlement, it may be gathered that the rain must have been at a distance of at least three miles when the sound of it was first heard.

The children of Captain Kerr, the genial superintendent of the settlement, were never allowed to wear shoes and stockings and were perhaps the healthiest offspring of white people I ever saw in the tropics, the two circumstances being regarded by their father as cause and effect. This may be worth the consideration of parents in hot countries; the more especially as, other things being equal, the superior robustness caused by bare feet has evidence in its favour from many quarters, and constitutes a theory adopted in the therapeutic system of the celebrated Father Kneipp, of Wörishofen, which has attained so much success in Bavaria and Austria.

While at the penal settlement I once saw what was to me a novel and curious sight—a capon sitting on five-and-twenty eggs. Captain Kerr informed me that this distortion of nature was advantageous, not only because the number of eggs so hatched was much larger than could be covered by a hen, but because the foster-father was more

faithful to his charge than the natural mother. I cannot remember the process by which the quasi-maternal instinct was induced, except that a part of it was the pulling out of some feathers from the breast and giving the bird a dose of spirits. I know, however, it was not a difficult one, and as it is well known that the males of some species of birds take turn and turn about in sitting with the females, it is possible that the same instinct once existed in the gallinaceous family or its ancestors, and may be easily revived.

At different times I made several journeys into the interior, starting from the Massaruni settlement. One of these was up the Cuyuni, to the diggings of the British Guiana Gold Company, an enterprise which, initiated in 1864, had but a short existence. An account of this journey written at the time is given in a separate chapter.

Between the first rapids of the Essequebo and the lower path used by me between it and the Demerara, there is much beautiful scenery. Though with little high ground on either bank, the river is interspersed with beautiful islands, and in several places divided into many separate channels, containing rapids more or less dangerous to navigation even in small boats. On one occasion I was ascending one of these rapids in a large barge belonging to Captain Kerr. The rest of the party, which included two or three other Europeans, had gone ashore to walk along the bank, while the boat was being dragged up by a number of men hauling at a long rope. Two Indians (Arawaks) remained with me, one at the bow and one at the stern, each fortunately wielding a large paddle. While lying down in the tent, imagining myself in perfect security, I was admiring the grand sight afforded by the great river lashed into white foam for several hundred yards in front of me, watching too with interest the struggles and tumbles of the men as they tugged against the great rush of water. Suddenly I became aware that the boat had reversed its course, and was going rapidly down-stream. The rope had snapped, and we were running headlong down the rapids,

after having, by the labour of some two hours, nearly reached their head. The swamping of the boat seemed inevitable, in which case my fate would have been sealed; as in a rapid so full of rocks even the Indians with their wonderful powers of swimming would have had but little chance of escape. At this crisis there was *not* presented to my mind an instantaneous picture of my past life, such as others have described in similar circumstances. My sole thought was of getting out of the tent and rid of my clothes as quickly as possible, and this I achieved with a rapidity which the spectators described as marvellous. The excitement of the moment enabled me to drag off in a few seconds a pair of long boots, which, under ordinary circumstances, would have taken as many minutes. By this time the boat was hurrying along at a tremendous speed in a position diagonal to the stream. I was not left long in suspense; for almost immediately the stern grated heavily on a rock, and the bow, still in deep water, swung round until we were at right angles to the bank. This, ordinarily the most dangerous position of all, now proved our safety. In an instant we were at the edge of a long eddy in which the water coursed upward; and the Indians, who had seemed up to now paralysed and helpless, at once recovered courage. Dashing in their paddles, they with a few frantic strokes brought us into safety—the whole occurrence having occupied probably not more than two or three minutes of time.

While encamped overnight on an island not far above the head of these rapids during a short trip made with Mr. Quintin Hogg (of London Polytechnic fame), my companion started to swim across a channel of the river some hundred and fifty yards wide. The stream was not very rapid, and for a strong swimmer, as he evidently was, there was no reason for alarm on that account. But noticing unusual excitement among the boat hands, I was informed on inquiry that that part of the river was greatly infested with perai—a flat broad fish much dreaded by the

Indians owing to its propensity to take large bites of flesh from the person of the unwary swimmer. Nothing would induce my men to enter the water at that place. Fortunately, Mr. Hogg got back safely, but not before I had had a very *mauvais quart d'heure;* for, in addition to other anxiety, the thought struck me that, had a disaster happened, I, being supposed to be better "up to the ropes," would certainly have been held responsible.

Close to the third series of rapids I was, on another occasion, for the first time, made alive to the extraordinary number of "jiggers" (the Spanish chegoes) which infest abandoned Indian settlements. I determined to use a deserted shed as shelter for the night; and being very tired, as soon as my hammock was slung I went straight to it from the boat in my bare feet. The distance was not more than thirty yards and was only traversed once again, and yet in the next two days over twenty jiggers were taken from my feet. The Indian process of extracting them is by no means a painful one; in fact, it gives rather a pleasant sensation. It is done with a sharp piece of very hard wood, which is far better than the needle usually employed, as it enables the whole "sac" to be removed without puncture. More painful, however, is the application of tobacco ash to the wound for the purpose of preventing the spread of infection by killing such germs as may be left.

In the Essequebo, over a hundred and fifty miles from the coast, animal life, apart from insects, and in the morning and evening birds, was rarely visible. Caymans were sometimes pointed out to me by the Indians, and a commotion in the water as we approached showed where one or more had entered it; and the muffled roar which was said to proceed from these creatures was common enough at night to show that they must have been plentiful. But I am not sure that I ever saw one; in fact, the only wingless animals which were ordinarily visible were the great iguana lizards, and these only for an instant, when now and then

one would flop into the water from an overhanging branch at our approach.

As far as I remember, the only human beings I ever saw in this upper portion of the river, with the exception of one or two Canaimas, were Indians from the interior in large canoes making their way to town for the purpose of selling hammocks, tame monkeys, parrots, toucans, etc. These people are always too shy to take notice of the strange intruder on their domain, and passed by in apparently total unconcern, the row of brown bodies bending to the paddles, with parrots perched along the gunwale, and perhaps one or two sakawinki or marmoset monkeys squatting on a heap of hammocks in the bow, forming a curious spectacle.

The Guiana kingfishers, though all have apparently the same habits as the one familiar to us in England, are very unlike him in one respect; being comparatively shabby in plumage and entirely without the bright feathers of their English cousin, a circumstance the more remarkable inasmuch as birds in Guiana are generally far more brilliantly decked than in Europe. As though to compensate for this defect, nature has created another bird, the jacamar, also in several varieties, all of which are singularly like the kingfishers in shape and habits, but with plumage of a beautifully iridescent green. They have the same habit of sitting on low boughs over the water, of dashing off now and then and quickly returning, but unlike them, they do not touch the water, and their flights seem aimless. But perhaps as they live entirely on insects, the prey seized is ordinarily invisible at a short distance.

Fireflies are sometimes attracted by the camp fire in such numbers as to become a nuisance. I once tried, after the example of Waterton, to read by the light of many of them collected in a bottle. It was possible to do so by passing the bottle over the letters as they were read, but the operation was a tedious one. I do not doubt the light would be useful, as mentioned by Waterton, for finding a note in a pocket-book: but as there is in the forest an entire absence

of wind, I should even for this purpose prefer a lucifer match, which in Waterton's day was unknown. There are two kinds of fireflies in Guiana, one of them common in town, which emits its light from its tail, and only, I think, when it opens its wings; the other met exclusively in the forest, which gives a continuous light from two round membranes in its head, having the effect of eyes. In Fiji I have seen a variety of the same insect which combines both of these lights.

Mosquitoes are not common away from the coast of Guiana. A bluish variety sometimes paid me a visit in the forest, but there was never more than one or two at a time. In the towns, however, and on the coast they are a veritable plague. The urban variety is quite distinct from the rural one, being far more active and elusive. It would indeed almost seem as if the continual presence of the enemy, man, had produced special alertness against his attacks; for however quick the motion of the hand in the endeavour to kill him, the town mosquito generally escapes; whereas his country cousin of the coast permits himself to be crushed with comparative ease. On some parts of the coast these creatures are in enormous numbers. Driving once along the Berbice coast with an officer of police, and observing a great number of these plagues on my companion's back, I, with his permission, struck his coat with the flat of my hand, and there remained a very fair impression of the palm and fingers in dead mosquitoes. As it was midday with a bright sun, when the insects are in least abundance, it may be imagined what the numbers must have been at night.

There is a less common variety of mosquito, the "gallinipper," which, unlike the others, drives into the flesh so long a proboscis that when it is entirely inserted the creature seems to be standing on his head. Some years before my time, when troops were quartered in New Amsterdam, Berbice, two officers after mess went out into the marsh close to the barracks, with bared backs, for the purpose of deciding a bet as to which would withstand the

mosquitoes the longer. They were allowed to smoke. At length one of them could bear the pain no longer, and he began to get up, when, seeing his companion writhing with his head buried in his arms, it occurred to him to touch his naked back with the lighted end of his cigar. This proved too much for endurance. The patient, jumping up, ejaculated, "By heavens! I can stand mosquitoes, but I'm hanged if I can stand a gallinipper!"

The doubt which is commonly expressed as to whether mosquitoes are more prevalent in tropical or temperate regions I have good reason to share from my own experience. The two places where I found them most numerous were the Mahaicony Creek, one of the smaller rivers which falls into the sea east of the Demerara, and on the Lake St. Clair in Canada, where I was once duck-shooting. In either place it was impossible to open one's mouth after dark without a number going down the throat, and even before dark, by a rapid motion of the hand, one could make a visible lane in the dense cloud surrounding one's head. In Newfoundland, also, as regards the unsettled districts, I found them almost equally numerous. With reference to the recent discovery of mosquitoes as the source of malaria, it becomes of special interest to inquire into the cause of the common experience that malaria is usually most virulent on the windward, and not, as might be expected, on the leeward side of the marsh, where mosquitoes are bred and malaria is supposed to arise.

During my service in the Upper Demerara River district, taking advantage of short periods of leave, I made two expeditions with Sir William Holmes, one up to the head of Mahaicony Creek (which after a course of some eighty miles in length falls into the sea to the east of Demerara) and one to the Waini River. Sir William was interested in the production of balata, a gum which is contained in the bully tree, bearing a close resemblance to gutta-percha, and said to be quite equal to it for non-conducting purposes. Though the tree in question is abundant in Guiana,

especially about the lower courses of the Waini and the Barima, the cost of labour is too great for obtaining gum in sufficient quantity by the process of tapping. To meet this difficulty, Sir William conceived the idea of crushing the bark of felled trees by machines, several of which he had at work in different parts of the colony. Unfortunately this process extracted from the bark other ingredients besides the gum, which was thus rendered valueless, and so the enterprise failed. If, however, there should be some day discovered an inexpensive means of separating the tannin from the gum, the millions of bully trees in Guiana would thus be rendered available for increasing the world's supply of gutta-percha, of which the continual rise in price shows that it has become very inadequate to the demand.

In the expedition to the Waini we went by sea to Plantation Anna Regina, at the extreme end of the cultivated portion of the coast beyond the Essequebo. There we took to a tent-boat, and proceeded by a canal which connects this plantation with the Pomeroon River. Descending that river to a point near its mouth, we entered the Moruca channel, which connects the Pomeroon with the Waini. Another channel connects the Waini and the Barima; and had we chosen, we might have entered the Orinoco and, without leaving the boat, have ascended it and its tributaries to the immediate neighbourhood of Santa Fe de Bogota, making altogether a journey of something like 2,000 miles, all by fresh-water navigation. But we went no further than the Barima, and after spending two days on the Waini returned by the route we came, the journey occupying some ten days altogether. After leaving Anna Regina, the only white man seen was Mr. McClintock, the Superintendent of Rivers and Creeks of the Pomeroon district, at whose house on that river we spent a night both going and returning. McClintock was a singular character, who, however, earned liking and respect from all who came in contact with him. He had for years lived a solitary life, surrounded only by Indians, of whom his knowledge was

unsurpassed. As he was the only educated man in the colony with similar experience, I always regretted that I was able to see so little of him. His visits to the civilised part of the colony were very rare; and so this was the first as well as the last time we ever met.

When in the Moruca channel on that journey we came to a long-abandoned Catholic missionary station called, I think, San Antonio. The building, though much dilapidated and with vegetation forcing itself through the walls in all directions, nevertheless afforded enough shelter to induce us to spend the night there. When preparing to sling our hammocks we were astonished to see what looked like a black curtain hanging from one of the rafters. On closer inspection this turned out to be entirely composed of bats hanging to one another by their feet, with their heads downwards. We were told they were vampires. As the windows had altogether disappeared, and there were abundant other openings in the building which did not form part of the original design, it was impossible to get rid of the creatures altogether. During the whole night we were disturbed by the frequent whirr of their wings, and the boat hands, who had no mosquito curtains, showed their belief in the blood-sucking propensity by huddling all together in the tent of the boat with the curtains fastened down.

CHAPTER VII

Visit to River Cuyuni, Lower Essequebo, and mouth of Massaruni—First rapids of Cuyuni—Weight carried by Indians—Bargain with Indians—Fast in a rapid—Arrival at gold-diggings—British Guiana Gold Company—First touch of fever—Humming-birds (?) at night—Primitive gold-washing—Passage down rapids—Wonderful swimming.

I HAVE in a former chapter referred to a visit paid by me within the first few months of my service to the gold-diggings on the River Cuyuni, and I insert here an account of it, written immediately after my return, and almost the only contemporary record of my impressions now in my possession.

On Saturday, July 9th, 1864, having obtained a week's leave from the Governor, I started on a trip to the gold-diggings of British Guiana. It has been long known that gold existed in the tributary of the Essequebo called the Cuyuni. The Venezuelans, who occupy the territory at its source, have for some years had "diggings" there. Some miners, making their way thence towards British territory, found pieces of auriferous quartz much nearer the mouth of the river, and this discovery led to the formation of "The British Guiana Gold Company, Limited." A grant was obtained from the Government of a tract of land on either side of Waria Creek, where the gold had been found. This stream falls into the Cuyuni about twenty-five miles from its mouth. The place is most difficult of access, owing to a large number of almost impassable rapids intervening between it and the nearest settlement. An idea of these may be formed from a knowledge of the fact that, without anything deserving the name of a cascade, the river in twenty-five miles falls about one hundred and twenty

feet. Owing to this difficulty in the way of the projected enterprise, the Government was very liberal in its terms, granting the exclusive right of mining for twenty-one years over about thirty square miles of land. Only a few acres of this tract, however, were known to be auriferous, the rest being entirely unexplored, and the whole covered by a dense forest.

I started from Georgetown in the colonial steamer at 8.30 a.m., Mr. A., the managing director of the Gold Company, who was to be my *compagnon de voyage*, being also on board. After leaving the Demerara two hours of roughish sea brought us to the mouth of the Essequebo. I am ashamed to say that before my arrival in Guiana this river was scarcely known to me even by name. It is, however, nearly as long as the Elbe, and has four or five tributaries longer than the Thames, two—the Massaruni and Cuyuni—probably twice as long. A strong ebb tide was against us, so that it took us nearly seven hours to reach our destination at the mouth of the Massaruni. In this fifty odd miles of its course the stream was, I should say, never less than a mile wide. Islands abound, covered down to the water's edge with dense masses of foliage. It is thus, frequently for miles together, impossible to see both banks at the same time. Inhabitants are few and far between. Here and there a narrow opening in the "bush," and a boat at the bank, indicated the presence of a settler. The house, however, is almost invariably concealed from view. One solitary black, paddling a "curial," was the only human being we saw until we reached Macouria Creek, about thirty-five miles up. Here several sea-going vessels were lying alongside the bank. The crews appeared to be moving about busily on deck, the distance preventing us from seeing what they were about. There is, however, little doubt that they were taking in timber, the only cargo to be obtained there. With these exceptions, nothing was to be seen but sky, trees, and water. The colour of the latter, as in most other rivers of Guiana, is that of porter

or beer, according to the depth—much, in fact, like that of a Scotch burn which has run through a peat country. When held up to the light in a tumbler it appears, however, only slightly discoloured, and is by no means unpleasant to the taste.

A short distance up the Massaruni, itself about a mile wide at its mouth, is Her Majesty's penal settlement for the convicts of British Guiana. From there, after a night passed in our hammocks on board the steamer, we started again at daybreak. Our conveyance was a "curial," or dug-out, that is, a large tree hollowed out into a canoe-shaped boat. Our locomotive power consisted of twelve men with paddles. Proceeding a short distance up the same bank of the Massaruni, we then crossed over to the other side to get some provisions for the men at a store belonging to the Gold Company. Here some huge rock-boulders and an occasional house relieved the monotonous outline of forest. A brown object appeared, motionless, on one of the rocks, which, on nearer approach, proved to be a naked Indian, squatting on his haunches, and fishing with a short rod and line. His eyes were intently fixed on the water, and he never raised his head or moved a muscle of his body, though we passed within twenty yards of him, and such a boat-load as ours must have been an extremely rare sight. Only when we had gone a considerable distance did he condescend to look up. I have observed the same behaviour in Indians inhabiting the far interior. What appears to be a total absence of curiosity is really shyness. When they become acquainted with you they will examine everything you possess with the minutest scrutiny, though they usually pass a stranger without appearing to be aware of his presence.

We soon reached the Cuyuni, which, at its mouth, is also more than a mile wide. After about three and a half hours' paddling up that river the rapids came in sight. Here we left our curial and walked over the portage on a road recently cleared by the Gold Company. The party con-

sisted of twenty, chiefly Indians and Bovianders, besides myself and Mr. A., and even this number hardly sufficed to carry our impedimenta, which included several days' rations for the workmen at the diggings, besides our own canisters and hammocks. Not for the first time was I struck by the ease with which Indians manage to carry an enormous weight. One sturdy little fellow had on his back, nearly a foot below the position of a soldier's knapsack, a bunch of plantains weighing probably about eighty pounds, and then took upon his head a canister of provisions weighing nearly a hundredweight. The latter was put down once only during a march of about five miles, which was accomplished under the two hours. The plantains were hung on the back by means of a broad belt, made of a single leaf, passing across the chest and over the arms.

All along the road we heard the roar of the rapids near us, though dense foliage prevented even a glimpse of the water. On reaching the river again we embarked in a tent-boat awaiting us, in which we were rowed against a rapid current for five hours. The stream was, in many places, as picturesque as running water, studded with green wooded islands and banks, could possibly be, in the absence of high ground and all signs of human existence. Occasionally I was reminded forcibly of the Thousand Islands in the St. Lawrence, the scenery of which somewhat falls short, in my opinion, of the description usually given of it by enthusiastic travellers, owing to the wants above mentioned. Just before starting again, an Indian, paddling alone in a wood-skin, came alongside. We saw that he had game, which proved to be a Winebisere deer, a powie (bush-turkey), and an accouri. "What for you sell 'um?" says Mr. A., pointing to them. "Knife," replies the Buck.[1] "Give you dollar—one, two, three, four shillings," rejoins Mr. A., holding up that number of fingers. Buck: "No, six." Mr. A.: "Well, give 'um here." The money was paid. The Indian placed it alongside him without remark. (He had no

[1] Buck is the local name for Indian.

The Author in boat

HAULING BOAT UP RAPID, ESSEQUEBO RIVER

I.—*Face p.* 98

pocket, for the good reason that he had no breeches, and only a strip of cloth round the loins.) After handing over the game, he looked up and pointed to his mouth. "Soapy?"[1] asked Mr. A. An infinitesimal toss of the head signified "Yes." A large allowance of rum was handed to him. He took it down neat with the utmost *sang-froid.* Not a word or gesture of thanks. A very slight elevation of the eyebrow on finishing the draught was the only sign of satisfaction. Otherwise not a muscle of his face moved. He handed back the cup, and paddled off silently as he came. He was probably off to town to get drunk on one shilling of the six, and while in that condition to be cheated out of the rest—a handsome reward for a hundred and fifty miles of paddling.

At five o'clock we reached another rapid, which it was necessary to avoid in order to accomplish our journey in a day. The baggage had again to be carried, this time only a distance of a hundred yards. A large "banaboo," or thatched shed, had been erected here for the benefit of people benighted on the way. Now came the exciting part of the day. We had to pass a long rapid before dark, and every nerve had to be strained to reach it in daylight. In order to inspirit the men, who were beginning to show signs of fatigue, I took a paddle myself and began to work it vigorously, much to the astonishment of the natives. An hour's hard work, and we reached the foot of the rapid, just as the sun was going down. In this equatorial latitude twilight does not last long, so that we had no time to spare. Paddling was now useless, owing to the rapidity of the current, and all hands had to jump into the water, some to pull at a long rope fastened to the bow, and others to shove. By a slow process of alternate paddling and hauling we got about three-quarters through the quick water, when we suddenly stuck fast. All our strength failed to move the canoe either forwards or backwards. It would now have been quite dark but for the meagre light of the moon,

[1] The Dutch *soupje*, a little sup.

wanting about two days of its first quarter. A dense bank of clouds had nearly reached us. Here was a pretty fix. At least two hundred yards of roaring, foaming water was on either side of us, being far too deep in many places to admit of wading. The prospect of passing a night in an open boat in such a position was, with rain impending, by no means pleasant. We found at last, however, that the canoe was fast on a narrow ledge, so that, by applying all our force at the extremities, we managed to turn her round, and thus got her into deep water again. We now made various unsuccessful efforts to grope out a passage in the darkness, each time having to go back, until at last by a tremendous effort, stimulated by a liberal allowance of grog served out to all hands in the water, we managed to get through, and in a short time arrived at our destination.

A light shining on the bank announced the neighbourhood of human beings, of whom save the Indian we had seen none since the early morning. A house was ready for our reception, such as I was surprised to find in this wild neighbourhood. A substantial meal also was prepared, our voices having been heard through the still night air long before our arrival; and last, but far from least, there was the cheery face of Mrs. P., the wife of the manager, to welcome us.

I was kept awake the greater part of the night by mosquitoes (having neglected to bring my curtain). I mention this because, after some four months of travel on the rivers of Guiana, this was the first time that I saw any mosquitoes in the bush. Why they should be here and not in the Demerara it is hard to say. To make up for this annoyance there were no bats. Mr. P., the manager of the Gold Company, told me he had never seen any there. I suppose that, having been so recently settled by men, these interesting blood-suckers, so prevalent elsewhere in the Guiana forest, had not yet discovered so promising a field for their operations.

The next day neither Mr. A. nor I was fit for much,

being tired with the long day's journey of the day before. A pain in my back and a feeling of extreme lassitude, Mr. A. told me, betokened "colony fever." Feeling up to nothing, I spent most of the day in my hammock reading the batch of the *Times* brought by the last mail. Meanwhile I had ample opportunity of looking about me. The house in which we were was raised many feet from the ground on piles. It was built throughout of wood, which had been cut and sawn on the spot. Only the nails and glass had been brought from town. The work done on the place in little over two months certainly did credit to Mr. P.'s energy. I could see from the verandah that a space of about ten acres had been cleared, and on it had been built several large and substantial-looking "logies" for the workmen. The river was close in front, about three hundred yards wide, with a very rapid current. I was told that the land opposite is an island, there being a wider branch of the river on the other side of it. The island must have been a very long one, as there was no sign of its coming to an end in the long reach down which I was looking.

The following night I was astonished by a loud humming, like that of a monstrous bee. I lit a candle and found two humming-birds flying about and occasionally dashing themselves against the windows. I could not catch them, and they would not fly out, though I gave them the opportunity; so I had to endure the nuisance, and soon went to sleep in spite of it. These little creatures announced their presence in like manner the two following nights, disappearing during the day. As the bird is not nocturnal in its habits, there was a mystery which was not solved in our short stay.[1]

[1] Years after the above was written, on seeing an illustration in M. Bates' books on the Amazons, showing an extraordinary likeness in shape between humming-birds and sphinx moths, the noise made by both in flying being also much alike, there occurred to me, as the possible explanation of the mystery, that the disturbers of my night's rest on this occasion might not have been humming-birds at all, but specimens of the insect which imitates them so strangely.

July 12th, 1864. I was ill all day with unmistakable fever, and was thus unable to accompany Mr. A. "aback," whither he went to inspect the gold-washing. I managed, however, in the afternoon to stroll over a little hill close by the house. It was almost entirely composed of quartz boulders. Being unable to find in these a single trace of gold, and knowing that this was to be the site of the crushing machinery, and this the stone to be operated on, I almost came to the conclusion that the company would not pay. When, however, in the evening I told Mr. A. my impressions about the absence of gold from the quartz, he smiled quietly and said he could convince me to the contrary before we left.

The next day, after coffee, we started with Mr. P., the manager, for the washing-ground. The latter is situated on a little creek two miles from the river. A road thither had been made through the bush, that is, the trees had been cut down, leaving an avenue about twelve feet wide. In other respects morass would better describe what we walked upon. Labour and perseverance, such as employed by Stephenson on Chat Moss, would be required to justify the name of road. However, we waded through at last, and found the diggers hard at work. A space of about two acres had been cleared, and two logies erected for the workmen, who preferred sleeping there to the walk out and in. A little brook had been dammed to form a reservoir. The dam appeared to be unnecessarily strong for so small a body of water, being composed of a double row of piles with clay puddled in between. I was informed, however, that a barrier nearly as strong had been swept down a few weeks previously by one night's rain. Nowhere in the world, I imagine, is the proverb, "It never rains but it pours," more true than in Guiana.

(Here follows, in the original, a minute description of the gold-washing process as I saw it. Being the primitive mode adopted in the early days of Californian and Australian "diggings," it has been so often described that

its details may be omitted here. It may be mentioned, however, that the soil being washed was taken from a stratum of yellow clay about two feet thick and about two feet below the surface, and that when a large barrelful had been washed, I had the satisfaction of seeing a few grains of gold drop through the small residue of heavy black sand which was left by the process.)

The rain poured down in torrents during the whole of our walk home, rendering the road even less "negotiable" than before.

During our absence one of the large boulders near the river had been blasted. Many of the pieces contained small specks of gold, and, according to Mr. A., stone of that character would give about five ounces to the ton, whereas two ounces would pay handsomely. I hope for the sake of the company that all the stone in the neighbourhood is like this. I have, however, strong doubts on the point, as much of it appeared to my inexperienced eye as of a very different character. Besides, only boulders are apparent, and though possibly rich veins exist, it is problematical whether the capital of the company will hold out until they are found. The following day we started homewards. Our speed down-stream was a great contrast to the long and weary toil upwards, and we accomplished in five hours what had before taken twelve. Instead of walking over the path, we "ran" the rapids. This was an operation more exciting than safe, several lives having been already lost by it in the year the company has been at work. The water was so low that one of the rapids had become a cataract, which it was impossible to pass by "running." So the boat was brought to shore and turned round with her stern to the water. She was then dragged out into the current by a long rope tied to her bow, all hands wading, some holding the rope and others the gunwale of the boat. In this way we were gradually lowered down the fall, and also down about a hundred yards of rapid below it. When the water was too deep for wading,

some of the hands would swim down to a rock, one of them holding the end of the rope, the others meanwhile holding the boat, and only letting her go when their companions were safe on *terra firma.*

These half-breeds swim in a wonderful manner. For pure amusement they would throw themselves into and under a current running faster than the fastest mill-stream with sharp rocks jutting out in every direction. In a few moments they would reappear scrambling out a hundred yards down, laughing and screaming in a way which showed clearly that they were not out of breath. It was a marvel that they had not been dashed to pieces. I was told, however, that they only use one hand in swimming, the other being held out to act as a buffer.

We found that the superintendent of the penal settlement was absent from home, and not expected until next day. As the steamer had gone and there was no other means of conveyance but what he could afford us, we were compelled to await his arrival. The next afternoon he came, and kindly lent us his large boat with a crew of ten convicts. After pulling the whole night, with the exception of a very short rest when the tide was too strong against us, we arrived by daybreak at Plantation Philadelphia, whence there is a road along the coast the whole way to the Demerara. The boatmen sang, or rather yelled, during the whole passage, rendering sleep impossible. As they do not pull as well without this licence and time was an object to us, we let them have their way. That they were in a condition to pull and sing for twelve hours with scarcely any intermission argued well for their treatment at the settlement. Having procured a conveyance, we arrived at Georgetown about noon.

CHAPTER VIII

Visit to England in 1865—"Mad blood" and its cure—Cannes—Race between English gig and French naval boats—Lord (afterwards Duke of) Abercorn—Interview with Lord Brougham, the ex-Chancellor—His extraordinary memory of the distant past—Administer a flogging, and its consequences—Lady Jocelyn—Conversation with Mr. Gladstone—Witnessed Bill passed in one day through Lords and Commons, hearing speeches from many leading statesmen—Return to Guiana—Political condition of Colony—Negro vanity—Act in new district; experiences there—Mr. Crosby—Chief Justice Beaumont—Appointed to West Coast district—My disagreeable position—Appointed Administrator of St. Lucia.

IN December, 1865, bad health obtained for me leave for six months to visit England. Passing a second time the whole panorama of lovely islands from Barbados to St. Thomas, I embarked at the latter place on the (at that period) great paddle-steamer *Seine*, which conveyed me to Southampton in thirteen days. When informed that the Lizard light was in sight, though still suffering from sea-sickness, I managed to crawl up on deck, and I shall never forget my sensation on seeing the two eyes of the light which told of home after long years of absence. Though a similar experience was to be often repeated, its effect was never quite the same.

Having gone down to Leamington with Frederick Somerville to attend the Warwickshire Hunt ball, we had dined at the Clarendon Hotel there. Immediately afterwards I had a severe attack of what is called in Demerara "mad blood," an aggravated form of nettle-rash. Remembering a remedy made known to me by Bishop Austin, I took at once a very hot bath, and a complaint which usually remains for many hours was so quickly cured that about

half-past ten we drove to Warwick, where the ball was held. This was a somewhat dangerous experiment in mid-winter with the snow on the ground, but being young then, I suffered no ill effects, and enjoyed much the meeting with several old friends.

In March, 1866, I went to the Riviera to visit my aunt and sister at Cannes. Again the effects of a hot climate made themselves unpleasantly evident. Lord (afterwards Duke of) Abercorn had there an English gig, in which I sometimes took an oar, and though I was never of professional form, and had not rowed when at Oxford, much practice in Canada and Guiana had rendered me (as I perhaps flattered myself) nearly as good as others of the crew, and I was therefore anxious to take part in a coming race against the boats of the French fleet. But an attack of malarial fever prevented me from training, and the race took place without me.

Mr. (now Captain) Philip Green, entirely untrained, pluckily took the place at the last moment of another who had not put in an appearance; but, though thus heavily handicapped, and in spite of an accident in turning the flagship at the end of the first half of the course, the Englishmen passed all the other boats except one, and only lost the race by a few inches after a desperate finish with the twelve-oared galley of the French Admiral. Besides Mr. Green, our crew on this occasion consisted of Lord Mount Edgcumbe, Colonel (now General Sir George) Higginson, and Mr. Erskine, of Cardross (now Serjeant-at-Arms of the House of Commons), with Lord Elphinstone as coxswain, all of whom, except the last, are still alive.

Lord Abercorn, though he was not one of the crew in the race, very frequently took an oar, and rowed a very good one, despite the fact that, as he was proud of saying, he already had over twenty grandchildren. He had still a remarkably fine physique, and it was easy to understand that when he married Lady Abercorn (who, it may be added, combined with her fine features and figure the charm

AT VALLOMBROSA VILLA, CANNES, 1866

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19

1. Lord Elphinstone
2. Lady Ernestine Edgcumbe
3. Author (standing)
4. Sir Kenneth McKenzie, Bart.
5. Lieut.-Colonel Cocks (late Coldstream Guards)
6. Mrs. Henry Baring
7. Duc de Vallombrosa (standing)
8. Lady Albertha Hamilton (now Marchioness of Blandford)
9. Countess of Mount Edgcumbe
10. David Erskine, Esq., of Cardross
11. Marquis (afterwards Duke) of Abercorn (standing)
12. Duchesse de Vallombrosa
13. Col. (now General Sir) George Higginson
14. Earl of Mount Edgcumbe
15. Lady Georgiana Hamilton (now Countess of Winterton)
16. Hon. Mrs. (now Lady) Higginson
17. Lady Elphinstone (standing)
18. Lady McKenzie
19. Mrs. (now Lady) Horatia Erskine

of manner which belongs to the real *grande dame*) they were regarded as the handsomest couple in England. Once walking up from the boat he made remarks to me which after events caused to be specially remembered. He said he supposed that when his party came into office, he would probably be offered Ireland, meaning the Lord Lieutenancy; but he did not think he would accept it, as X. (mentioning a recent holder of the office) had told him it too much deprived his girls of London society. Shortly after my return to Demerara I learnt that a Conservative Government had been formed, and that he had been induced to accept the office in question, which, indeed, he filled on two occasions, each time with distinguished success. The extent of this success showed that there were latent in him unrecognised abilities which required only the occasion to evoke them. In connection with the above remark, it may be mentioned as curious that all the daughters, both of himself and of the previous Lord Lieutenant whom he quoted, became the wives of husbands who either were at the time, or afterwards became, peers.

Cannes had at this time, as compared with now, a very small English society. Balls and dinner-parties were comparatively rare, the principal social amusement being picnics, of which two or more took place every week.

During my stay at Cannes I had an interesting interview with the celebrated Lord Brougham. Coming out of church one day, he said to my aunt: "Lady Grey, I hear the Governor of Demerara is staying with you, and I should so much like to see him." He had, at the time, so entirely lost his memory as regards the people about him that his mention of her name was remarkable. The cause, probably, was that it was that of her brother-in-law, the Lord Grey, of the Reform Bill, who was so closely connected with his official life, and especially with the singular episode which marked its close. Though the attempt was made to explain to him what was the actual nature of my office, nevertheless, when I visited him a few days after, he still

regarded me as Governor of Demerara. After putting to me various questions with regard to the present state of the colony, he gave me a most interesting account of its condition at the time of the court-martial on the missionary Smith, in connection with which case he made one of the earliest of the great speeches of his life. His familiarity with minute details of the events of that time was extraordinary, this being one of many instances when memory of the distant remains vivid when that of the recent past is altogether extinguished. The notes made of our conversation, which lasted for over an hour, have unfortunately been lost. I, however, remember this of him. At the time I had never previously heard of the missionary Smith, the memory of whose grossly unjust trial and brutal treatment had already, I think, died out in the colony; but being deeply interested in what was then told me, and especially so because the spirit manifested in connection with the court-martial in question had, notwithstanding the abolition of slavery, by no means altogether disappeared from the colony, I subsequently read up the subject, and was then astonished at the accuracy with which the veteran lawyer had, after the lapse of forty-two years, restated the facts of the case and his arguments in connection with it. During his relation he became much excited by a revived indignation. With one hand he took repeated pinches of snuff, which before the end of the interview was abundantly sprinkled over his shirt-front, while his other hand made quick gestures as though he were addressing a large audience. I saw him only once again, at a party given by the family in his villa. During the evening he walked through the room, taking, as far as I saw, no notice of anyone, and apparently unconscious of what was going on—a truly pathetic spectacle.

Another episode of my stay at Cannes naturally made on me a deep impression. A concert for a charitable object was being given by Madame Goldschmidt (the celebrated Jenny Lind), and one of the singers who took part in it

was a Count H., a Belgian of a well-known family. During his performance there was manifest excitement among some of those present, and it subsequently became known that this man had on several occasions grossly insulted Englishwomen whom he happened to meet in out-of-the-way places. The indignation of those specially concerned was naturally not lessened by the report that the man had been boasting of his misdeeds at the club, though presumably the description had fallen very short of their real gravity. At a conference of men principally concerned it was considered out of the question to prosecute, as that would have involved the giving evidence by the aggrieved in court. Finally, it was decided to give the man a thrashing, as the only available security against a repetition of his proceedings. After some days of looking for him in vain in the outskirts of the town, I met him in one of the principal streets. I was armed with a thick "supplejack" —a flexible stick made from a liane of the Guiana forest— the blows of which, though exceedingly painful, could do no permanent harm. He was of a size equal to my own, and had also a good stick in his hand ; but he made no defence when I began to beat him, and ran off, I pursuing him and administering repeated blows until he reached a house into which he rushed headlong and escaped.

Immediately afterwards I learned to my dismay that the house in question was that of the mayor, and that Count H. was a lodger or guest there. Without a moment's delay, and as it proved most fortunately, I went to see the Duc de Vallombrosa, who was then one of the principal landowners of the place, for the purpose of asking his advice. He had been educated in England, was fond of English sports and pastimes (including boxing), and with the aid of a charming wife, who belonged to one of the best families of France (Des Cars), made his house an agreeable rendezvous for the English, as well as for French Legitimist society. As he had been most kind and hospitable to me, and had had a long acquaintance with the place and its people, while all of the

victims of the offence which I had punished were more or less intimate with his wife, he at once occurred to me as the best adviser with respect to the course to be taken. I stated the case to him, and just as I finished my story, who should be announced but the mayor himself! He was in a violent passion, and when he learned who I was, if looks could kill, he would certainly have made an end of me there and then. His French poured out at such a rate that my unaccustomed ear could not keep pace with it, though the words "prison" and "cachot" were unpleasantly prominent. I remained silent, as also did his other hearer. When, however, the philippic had come to an end, the latter, after relating the acts which preceded my action, said: "Yes, Monsieur le Maire, M. Des Vœux, though he was ignorant that the premises entered were yours, and deeply regrets the intrusion, has of course broken the law, and will patiently bear the penalty. But you must allow that the provocation was very great, and, having now heard the circumstances, that the punishment inflicted was not more severe than was richly deserved. He will, if so sentenced, go to prison without murmur; but he will certainly write to his *Times* in order to show what Englishwomen may henceforward expect to suffer here without available redress. Now you know, Monsieur le Maire, that the English visitors have much enhanced the value of your property as well as mine; and this case when made public is not likely to render the place attractive to them, while it will be disagreeable to you personally to have it known that you have harboured such a blackguard in your house."

Seeing that this speech had had effect, I then expressed my deep regret for my unconscious offence against the dignity of the mayor's position, adding that, in his ignorance of the circumstances, his indignation was only natural. After the Duke had thrown more oil on the troubled water, the interview ended satisfactorily, and the mayor and I shook hands with mutual expressions of esteem.

Count H. immediately left Cannes, and shortly afterwards

I heard that the wretched man, probably overcome with shame, had committed suicide. The news gave me much pain, but there was consolation in the thought that I had done nothing avoidable, and that the death of such a man could not be a great loss to anyone; for it appeared that he had had to leave Belgium for offences similar to those he had committed at Cannes.

At Cannes I was fortunate to see much of Lady Jocelyn, who had come there for her daughter's health; fortunate, not only because she was a specially charming and agreeable woman, but because her subsequent intervention had probably much effect in relieving me from a painful position and thus beneficially changing my whole career. The daughter of Lady Palmerston (by her first husband, Lord Cowper), and having made an early marriage, which seemed in every way desirable, her early life gave promise of exceptional happiness, while the sweetness and amiability of her disposition seemed to be the last to deserve the cruel fate which awaited her. Only a very few years after her marriage her husband, after going one evening[1] in good health to the Tower, where he was on duty, died the next day of Asiatic cholera; and when dying herself of a lingering illness before reaching old age, she had already suffered the loss of all of her four children.

On my return from Cannes I spent some days at Drakelowe, a place then occupied by my cousin, (Sir) Henry William Des Vœux, having been left to his wife (Lady Sophia[2]) for life by her first husband, Sir Roger Gresley. Relations with whom one does not happen to be intimate are not apt to be always agreeable; and as the party in the house was a very small one, I scarcely expected my experience on this occasion to be a very pleasurable one. But, in fact, I have rarely had as much enjoyment from a country-

[1] The cholera was rife at the time in and around the Tower, where Lord Jocelyn's Militia Regiment was quartered, and though not bound to do so, he had felt it his duty to sleep there, so as to incur the same risk as his men.

[2] Daughter of Lord Coventry (7th Earl).

house visit. One of the guests was our cousin, Lord Anglesey (the second Marquis), who, to say the least, was very "good company," and our host having in him a large fund of ready and genial wit, they kept up between them a continuous flow of good stories, interspersed with good-natured "chaff" and quick repartee, which were to me specially entertaining as being in such strong contrast with my recent colonial experiences. Of these stories, among many others more amusing, only one has remained on my memory. Mrs. X., the wife of a great railway magnate (once much courted as being capable of making the fortunes of others besides his own), was being taken down to dinner by the host at —— House, when, seeing a statue in the hall, and being told that it represented Achilles, she said: "Oh, one of your lordship's ancestors, I suppose."

One day there came over to look at some thoroughbred racing foals with a view to their purchase Captain Machell, who afterwards became so well known on the turf. He was then a young man, tight-trousered and otherwise "horsey" in appearance, and he struck me as shrewd beyond his years—in fact, I surmised that if he bought the foals, as I believe he did, he would not have the worst of the bargain.

My cousin Henry William (whom I designate thus to distinguish him from by brother Henry Dalrymple, who subsequently succeeded to the baronetcy) was a member of the Jockey Club, and usually had a few horses in training. One of them of former years had been named "Heartbreaker"; and being curious as to the origin of this name, I asked his wife on the subject. She told me that the horse had, as a two-year-old, run a dead heat with two others (Hernandez, afterwards winner of the Two Thousand Guineas, and Ariosto) for a race at Newmarket, and she, having expected him to win easily, was grievously disappointed at the failure. Hence the singular name.

Just previous to my return to Guiana I had an interesting conversation with Mr. Gladstone. I happened to be at an evening party at his house in Carlton House Terrace; and when he heard from Frederick Cavendish where I was

serving he became much interested, and detained me in conversation a considerable time after most of the guests had taken their departure. He asked me many questions as to the condition of the colony, as to the extent to which it had recovered from the effects of slavery abolition, as to the state of the emancipated negroes, and of the coolie indentured labourers (about which I then knew comparatively little), and as to the continued existence of several estates of which he knew the names. He did not tell me, and I did not then know, that his family had owned property and slaves there; and I was naturally struck, therefore, by the extraordinary extent and minuteness of his local knowledge. His reputation for interest in the Colonies was at the time not great, and this, if it were to be taken as an average sample of his acquaintance with them, was therefore the more wonderful. When I afterwards came to know the facts, his knowledge ceased to be so astonishing, though it was still remarkable, considering that some thirty years had elapsed since his family's connection with the colony had ceased. There was, however, another circumstance which rendered this conversation specially noteworthy. Mr. Gladstone then held the position of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and on a motion from what was called "The Cave of Adullam," a debate in the House of Commons had been adjourned on which depended the fate of the Ministry. The motion was eventually carried, causing his resignation; and it was no ordinary man who at such a crisis could so divert his thoughts as to be able to talk with evident interest to an almost unknown stranger upon so comparatively unimportant a subject. I may mention here that years afterwards, when on a visit to Lord Sherbrooke (better known as Mr. Robert Lowe) at Caterham, I understood him to say that the first speech he had heard made by Mr. Gladstone in the House was one in defence of slavery,[1] for the abolition of which his family

[1] I believe this to have been a mistake, and that the speech was not in favour of slavery, but against sudden emancipation.

received compensation. As Mr. Lowe was not then a Member of Parliament, I presume he must have been there as a visitor; but perhaps I misunderstood him as to his having himself heard the speech.

While in England on this occasion I was a frequent visitor to the House of Commons, where by the friendly intervention of Frederick Cavendish or Alfred Denison, the Speaker's secretary,[1] I usually obtained a seat under the gallery, now become a much rarer privilege. In one of these visits I was fortunate enough to witness a very exceptional occurrence, viz. the passing of a Bill through all its stages on the same day, and also to hear most of the leading speakers on both sides—Gladstone, Disraeli, Lord Cranborne (now Lord Salisbury), John Bright, John Stuart Mill, and others. Mill, though the matter of his speech was excellent, had a manner of delivery which, in Oxford parlance, savoured of "donnishness." What I heard from most of the other speakers only answered the expectations which had been formed from their reputations; but as I had known little of him previously I was surprised, as well as much struck, by a remarkable speech from The O'Donoghue, the effect of which, in my opinion, was improved by a slight brogue, as well as by a fine presence and easy delivery. The subject of discussion was an Irish Coercion Bill; and after it had passed the Commons I went into the House of Lords, and there also saw it pass through all its stages, hearing at the same time speeches from Lord Russell (better known as Lord John) and Lord Derby, the father of the two Ministers, each of whom was subsequently my chief at the Colonial Office.

Some months after my return to Guiana a Government letter informed me that, in consequence of the absence of the senior magistrate, I had been appointed to act in the east coast and east bank Demerara district. This comprised the east bank of the Demerara for some fifteen miles up to the southern limit of my own district and

[1] Brother of the Speaker and my stepmother.

about an equal portion of the east coast, Georgetown being in the centre. It contained a considerable number of important sugar estates besides several negro villages, including Plaisance, the largest in the colony. I cannot say I liked the prospect of the change; but when I expressed to the Acting Governor how more than willing I should be to be left in my own district, usually considered much less desirable, he informed me that as being one of the only two magistrates with legal training I had been chosen on that account.

In order that my reluctance may be understood, some description is necessary of the constitution and condition of the colony. Trollope had termed the government of British Guiana a "despotism tempered by sugar." It appeared to me rather a despotism of sugar—and a sugar which in this, as in some human constitutions, is apt to turn acid. Though the legislative body, the Court of Policy, had a bare majority of officials, some even of these were permitted, as I think improperly, to own, or to be pecuniarily interested in, sugar estates, while the whole of the unofficial members owed their position and livelihood to the same product. Again, the additional members, composing with the Court of Policy "the Combined Court," which alone had the power of voting supplies, were nearly all either directly interested in sugar as managers of estates, or were carrying on a trade which chiefly depended on it. The revenue also was largely affected by the sugar crops, and that depended on a regular supply of labourers from the East. For though the negro is by fits and starts a far more effective workman than the coolie, it is only where, as in Barbados, density of population renders it difficult to obtain a livelihood otherwise, that reliance can be placed on him by the *average employer* for that regularity of work, or that special work in emergency, which is absolutely necessary not only for sugar, but for coffee, cacao, and, in fact, all of the more valuable West Indian exports. It may be easily understood, therefore, that the

Governor, while of course bound largely to consider the sugar interest, required to be, in an exceptional degree, strong and upright, in order to act independently of that interest for the welfare of the unrepresented classes which are the great majority of the population. Unless almost superhumanly politic also, his independence would meet with unmitigated abuse from the Press, he would have had a social life very far from agreeable, and might even have failed to obtain necessary supplies.

Very early in my career I had observed with dismay the effect produced on officials by this condition of things, and the awe in which the omnipotent planter was held by those of them who, not having been brought up in a West Indian atmosphere, were not always inclined to fall in with his view. I had, moreover, when occasionally holding a court for a brother magistrate, seen enough of the system of coolie indentured labour to dislike extremely the task of enforcing its draconic laws. Before I knew that such a task was to be imposed on me, I had expressed freely this dislike, with my reasons for it, in a letter to Lord Frederick Cavendish, who, as I knew, sympathised strongly with my views on the subject. When, in the angry excitement caused by my representations to Lord Granville, subsequently referred to, it was alleged against me that this dislike was due to personal feeling against planters, Lord Frederick considerately published this letter, in order to show that my view had been formed when I was still in the Upper Demerara district, and when, as I had had at the time scarcely any relations with planters, personal feeling against them was impossible. So the existence of this letter proved to be fortunate.

But however disagreeable the task before me, it had to be faced, and my life, which, owing to the comparatively small amount of official work, had up to this time been largely occupied in the observation of nature, was now to be monopolised by labour which became more and more distasteful as time went on.

As Georgetown was now in the centre of my district, I arranged to live there, and to "keep house" with my friend Sir William Holmes, whose family was in England. The mention of his name recalls an amusing incident occurring about this time, and curiously illustrating the extreme fondness for display which characterises the lower class of negro. Sir William's housekeeper had suddenly lost her husband, and seemed to be plunged in the deepest grief. She had received assistance towards the funeral, which she had caused to be made as imposing as possible, after the foolish custom which is prevalent in other parts of the world besides Demerara. On her return she was asked whether the ceremony had gone off to her satisfaction, when she replied: "Ah, funeral too sweet, Massa—fourteen silk umbrellas!" The fact of this special respectability of following had much tempered, and for the moment had entirely overcome grief, which was, nevertheless, undoubtedly genuine. An amusing illustration of the same weakness is given by Trollope, in his story of the two young black girls, who each, going to church, took by turns the part of the finely dressed lady and the kerchief-turbaned servant carrying the prayer-books behind her. One of these young ladies was afterwards pointed out to me by a West Coast planter, who confirmed the truth of the story.

In the new district I found the cases to be tried very numerous, and the great majority of them, though of small importance, presented difficulties in the way of ascertaining the truth, which, if justice were to be done, required much patience in overcoming them. Even with three to four courts a week I was continually obliged to sit far into the afternoon; and I was vain enough to consider myself not so inferior in brains to the other magistrates as to preclude continual wonder how it was that they managed to dispose of sixty to eighty cases in the course of three or four hours. The difficulties were caused by (1) lying, which in the case of the Indian coolie indicated such fertility of imagination and invention of pictorial detail as almost to amount to a

fine art; (2) by extreme want of intelligence on the part of many of the witnesses; and (3) chiefly, by the necessity of employing interpreters in the majority of cases. These were never good, speaking and understanding English very imperfectly, and sometimes knowing the witnesses' language but little better; while frequently I had reason to suspect, and sometimes was morally certain, that they had been rendered even more incompetent by bribery. At nearly every court there was required interpretation for two or three Indian languages and one or more varieties of Chinese; while rarely a week passed without cases in which witnesses or "parties" spoke only Portuguese or some dialect of savage Africa. In the latter case to get anything beyond the vaguest idea of what was said was sometimes, even with the employment of the utmost patience, impossible. As regards the character of the cases to be dealt with, there was rarely a court day without one or more serious charges, either of the gravest crimes, such as murder, wounding with intent, etc., the evidence of which had to be carefully recorded for trial by the Supreme Court; or of offences, some of them scarcely less serious, such as plantain-stealing in gangs, practice of Obeah, certain kinds of grave assaults and breaches of the Revenue laws, for the first two of which the magistrate could award up to thirty-nine lashes with a cat-o'-nine-tails, and for all of which his jurisdiction extended to six months' imprisonment with hard labour. Then there were in abundance petty theft, assault, and abusive language cases, brought not merely by Creoles,[1] as in my former district, but in about equal number by the many-tongued, indentured immigrants, and there were also a considerable number of petty debt suits.

But far surpassing all in number were complaints against immigrants and free labourers for breaches of the labour laws. While many of the other cases caused doubt and

[1] Creoles are not necessarily of mixed blood, the term being applied to all persons born in the West Indies, whether white or coloured.

much consideration as to where lay the truth, these were the subject of special anxiety. The law had been so framed and its net, covering all possible offences, was woven so closely, that not even the smallest peccadilloes could escape its meshes; so that, in fact, the manager, whenever a labourer annoyed him, had almost always in reserve some trifling neglect or other legally defined offence on which he could bring a complaint involving fine or imprisonment with hard labour, or both. Though probably only a few managers availed themselves of this power to its full extent, I came by degrees to see that, even in the case of the most humane, there was necessity for inquiry whether their grievances were really those of which they were complaining.

Now that I have the light afforded by a long official experience, I am inclined to regard this matter less harshly than I did; and I am willing to allow that a hatred of tyranny and a repulsion against anything indicating an approach to slave-driving may have caused me to have too little appreciation of the very great difficulties of the manager's position, and that I characterised perhaps with undue severity his occasional loss of temper.

I am not conscious that I ever did any substantial injustice to a manager, and most certainly I did not intentionally run my head against a stone wall by giving an opening to attack from the all-powerful interest which he represented; yet it was possibly true, what was afterwards said of me, by the only newspaper which dared to say a word in my favour, namely, that in my effort to stand upright against the pressure of that interest I may sometimes have seemed to lean backwards.

On the other hand, when tyrannous or illegal conduct, even such as was to a certain extent excusable, was justified in a hectoring tone, indicating that the planter's point of view would of course be accepted, and the labourer's plea necessarily rejected, public rebuke was plainly justifiable. Many symptoms pointed to the fact that this kind of tone was not merely adopted for the purpose of "trying it on"

with a new magistrate, but was induced by previous experience of facile persuasion. In fact, it became very easy for me to understand how, without supposing great inferiority in myself, it was possible for other magistrates to dispose of the business so much more quickly than I could do. Indeed, it is probable that here might have been found one of the principal causes of the universal want of confidence[1] in magistrates' decisions, which was afterwards found to exist by the Royal Commission.

While the careful examination which, for the reasons above indicated, was required for even the most simple cases no doubt restored confidence to the subject races, it also probably had the effect of prolonging inquiry in other cases as suggesting possibilities of success by means of false excuses. But however this may have been, notwithstanding all possible efforts to get at the truth, I feel little doubt that I sometimes failed, and that such failure was much more often at the cost of the labourers than of employers. For the conviction gradually forced itself upon me that with doctors entirely under the control of estate owners and having so much duty imposed upon them that, however conscientious, they could not do it otherwise than perfunctorily, it was quite impossible in many cases to decide with any confidence whether the labourers' excuses of illness for failure in work were just or not. And thus, though managers showed a growing displeasure because of the few of their charges which I dismissed, I was continually troubled with the feeling that I ought to have taken this course more often than I did.

Moreover, while the law compelled me to punish for desertion, and the fear of causing wholesale abandonment of the estates rendered it necessary to make this substantial,

[1] A minor, though by no means insignificant, cause of this want of confidence was the practice, which I refused to follow, of permitting the more influential managers to sit on the bench alongside the magistrate during the trial of their cases. For such a privilege could not but give the subject races the impression that decisions against them were unfairly obtained.

the half-starved appearance of most of those convicted could not but raise unpleasant doubts as to the conditions of life on the plantations which caused them to prefer to it the precarious existence of a fugitive.

Altogether, what with work in its nature intensely disagreeable and in quantity such as to make physically impossible its proper performance, what with the feeling that while causing bitter discontent to employers, I was probably not doing complete justice to the labourers, and what with health suffering severely from depressed spirits thus produced, my position was by no means an enviable one; indeed, it was only the sympathy of three or four warm friends which prevented it from becoming intolerable. But for the consideration urged upon me by them that resignation, even if it proved a relief to myself, would certainly not lead to improved conditions, I should have "thrown up the sponge," as I was more than once on the point of doing.

Among these friends the principal was Mr. Crosby, the Immigration Agent-General. Nature had made him thoroughly kindly and courteous, and though his long residence in the colony had made him so accustomed to its atmosphere that it disagreed with him less than myself, he on the whole regarded the immigration system much as I did, and his patient attention to the complaints of immigrants, even though, from want of the Governor's support, he was but seldom able to redress their grievances, made him so popular with them that they commonly spoke of him with respect bordering on affection. Though he has now been dead many years, I am told his name is still preserved among them — the Immigration Department being called, and still, I trust, deservedly, "Crosby Office." As in addition to his amiable qualities and to sympathies akin to my own, he was an educated man and a Cambridge graduate, we became great friends. I regarded him as one of the most upright public officers of the colony, and my subsequent resentment against Governor A. was in no small

degree due to his unjust treatment of Crosby, as brought to light by the Royal Commission.

Other valued friends were Chief Justice Beaumont and his clever and amiable wife. They occupied on Plantation Houston, in my district, a house which had formerly been the residence of the proprietor, and it was to their kindly hospitality that I was indebted for some agreeable society at a time when it was specially valuable. Mr. Beaumont united with much legal and general ability a fearless independence which was not at all in accord with the spirit which had previously predominated in the colony. Recognising, as I did, the undue consideration for planters' interests which was evidently expected from the courts, he bestowed a specially careful scrutiny upon the proceedings of the magistrates, who he believed to be generally biassed in this direction, and he offended the dominant class by frequently overruling their decisions on account of apparently trivial defects in procedure. Then his equity training caused him to regard and to condemn with severity the irregularities of trustees and executors, which must have been unusually prevalent in a colony where it was a familiar saying: "Don't make me your heir, make me your executor." As the trustees of estates of any value were usually men of prominence, and the *cestui-que-trusts* were often coloured people, the language employed by him in such cases, while earning for him universal respect from the weak, added greatly to the bitterness of the strong. But what perhaps more than all caused the enmity of the ruling class was his disregard of what had apparently come to be accepted by the courts as a settled principle, viz. that when the evidence of "white" and "coloured" was opposed, that of the "white" must necessarily prevail; his view, that the adoption of this principle would render the weak hopeless of redress when really injured, having been strengthened by cases where wrong and falsehood were unquestionably on the side of the white.

The animosity thus caused induced a hostile movement

against the judge which received powerful co-operation from Governor A., who did not lose the opportunity of conciliating those who could do so much to assist or obstruct his policy. Mr. Beaumont was drawn into controversies with the Executive in which he usually had right on his side, and as he wielded a forcible pen, he would, I have no doubt, been ultimately victorious, but that he allowed himself to be goaded into indiscretions which laid open his guard and gave the opportunity for a fatal thrust.

Eventually, on the petition of the Court of Policy, strenuously supported by Governer A., Mr. Beaumont was removed from office on the recommendation of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, despite the eloquent, and to my mind convincing, appeal in his favour of Sir Roundell Palmer (afterwards Lord Chancellor Selborne).[1]

But whether the Committee's recommendation was right or wrong, I have not the least doubt that the removal of Mr. Beaumont and the temporary triumph of Governor A. was, in a high degree, harmful to the colony; for it rendered independence on the part of judges and magistrates doubly difficult and dangerous, and I am much inclined to think that the disturbances which subsequently occurred on estates were, to a considerable extent, traceable to this cause. The evil would not have been so great if the judge had been offered another place elsewhere, as I venture to think he ought to have been, especially after the revelations respecting the administration of the colony which were made by the Royal Commission. For no act of his was in the least degree dishonourable. In fact, he had done vastly more good by his uprightness than any possible harm from his indiscretions, and most decidedly he did not deserve punishment which meant his ruin. But official forgiveness

[1] Sir Roundell Palmer evidently recognised that the real ground for attacking the judge was not that put forward, and regarding this as insufficient to warrant so heavy a penalty, he, to his great honour, sacrificed many hours of several days in the busiest legal season by undertaking the judge's defence gratuitously.

is not often extended to those who cause trouble. Mr. Beaumont remained in private life, and died a few years afterwards of a broken heart.

I have referred to Mr. Beaumont's case in what may appear to be somewhat unnecessary detail because it had a very important effect upon my own future. I was one of an exceedingly select number of Europeans who did not disguise their sympathy with the unfortunate Chief Justice. We took no open part with him, as that would have been quite useless; but our feelings were not concealed, and we were quickly to suffer for entertaining them. Mr. Crosby, who was the only leading official among us, shortly afterwards received that treatment from the Governor which was condemned by the Royal Commission, while the demeanour of His Excellency towards myself made me apprehensive that I should in no long time feel his displeasure. The opportunity soon came to him. The senior magistrate having returned to his district, I had some months previously taken up again the charge of my former district. On returning from one of my journeys up the river, I asked to breakfast with me at Hyde Park station a clergyman who had been visiting the Chinese settlement before referred to. In the course of conversation I expressed disapproval of some recent Government policy. I had never seen this person before, and have, happily, never met him since; but it was quickly evident that he had lost no time in relating our conversation to the Governor. For a few days afterwards I received a letter from the Colonial Secretary containing a request, which was practically a demand, on the part of His Excellency for the particulars of this conversation. Had I been asked in a proper way for my view on the impugned policy, I should have given it without hesitation; but being naturally indignant at the use made of a private conversation by one who had taken part in it while partaking of my hospitality, and especially at the Governor's conduct in taking advantage of it, I met the request with a firm, but entirely respectful refusal. I

heard no more of this matter, but within a week came what was, practically, the Governor's rejoinder. This was an order to take charge immediately of the West Coast of Demerara district.

This transfer involved the removal of my headquarters to a distance from town, the hire of a house in the district, and the disturbance of all arrangements for comfort which I had made in the expectation of permanent residence. Moreover, as the new district was one which could only be worked by road and also extended to such a distance from town that the use of hired conveyance was out of the question, I had at once to purchase a carriage, horses, and harness. As the Government allowed nothing for these changes, and my boat and canoes had to be sacrificed for a nominal price, the cost to me was severe. Even when such transfers are made purely in the public interest, such expenses operate as a heavy fine, which ought not to be inflicted in this form even in the case of misconduct. Of this, however, there was no pretence in my case. For whatever my sympathy with the deposed Chief Justice, I had done nothing to deserve, and had never received anything approaching to, censure of my acts, official or unofficial. But, however this may have been, it quickly became evident that pecuniary loss was the least of the evils which I had to suffer from the change.

Of the work of this district I need say little, except that it was almost precisely similar to that described in connection with the other sugar district in which I had acted, and was even more disagreeable. For being compelled to live at a distance from town, whither I could go but rarely, I had practically no society, and having to drive on the average from seventy-five to a hundred miles a week, such little time as was not occupied by courts, and going to and from them, was for the most part spent in solitude amid the dreary surroundings of a half-abandoned plantation, having a pasture, usually sodden, in front of it and the view of the sea entirely cut off by a dense row of

mangroves at a distance of some two hundred and fifty yards.

The planters of this district were among the most influential in the colony, and as they were a very united body, their displeasure was therefore the more formidable. But though there were some who under other circumstances I should have liked to know well, I quickly found that nothing beyond a distant acquaintance was possible, so diametrically opposed were our views as to what should be my line of conduct in court, where we were necessarily thrown into frequent contact.

It may be imagined that under these circumstances my life was not a happy one, and I should have found it even more difficult to bear but for an occasional visit to my friend Colonel Herbert,[1] then in command of the troops, who was one of the few who sympathised with my position, and who, whenever a few days' change was required, always afforded me a ready hospitality.

At last, after some six months of this life, the planters having become more and more hostile, one of them insulted me in open court, because I had discharged from custody two of his coolies, who, having been merely absent from work, had been illegally arrested without warrant. The only redress which the law permitted to me was the removal of the offender from the court, but as he was a Justice of the Peace, the case was one in which the Executive might have properly intervened by offering him the alternative of a public apology or the loss of his commission.

Meanwhile, Governor B. had succeeded Governor A., but the change was nothing in my favour. It was King Log following King Stork; and so, in making application to him, I had little hope that he would have the energy to accord me proper support. My doubt on this point proved to be only too well justified. While listening courteously to my representations that Executive support to the

[1] The Hon. William Herbert (now General).

magistrates was absolutely necessary for securing a decent measure of justice to the subject races, he declined to take any action, being evidently too afraid of the planting interest to run the risk of offending it.

Under these circumstances my position became well-nigh intolerable, and I almost made up my mind to resign my office; for I foresaw that if this were not done voluntarily, it would ere long be rendered compulsory, if not by my increasing ill-health, by concerted action on the part of the planters, such as had proved fatal to Chief Justice Beaumont.

Before finally throwing up the sponge, however, I determined to make an effort to obtain a transfer to another colony, and I accordingly applied to Lord Granville, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, for an appointment elsewhere, expressing willingness to accept one even with a smaller salary if it offered any prospect of promotion. Magistrates in Guiana had very rarely been promoted at all, and so far as I could ascertain, had never been transferred to another colony. Though for this reason I had little hope of success, I was quickly and agreeably disappointed.

In less than two months from the despatch of my application a letter from Lady Jocelyn, followed the next mail by a despatch to the Governor, announced to me the offer of the appointment of Administrator of the Government and Colonial Secretary of St. Lucia. Needless to say, I gladly accepted it, though the salary was no greater than that which I was receiving, and the house free of rent would not be compensation for the necessary expenditure upon entertainment. On this account the new appointment was not generally held to be to my advantage, and this consideration added to the pleasure of the sugar magnates at my departure — a pleasure which received emphatic expression in the daily newspaper which was published in their interest.

From some half a dozen of friends I parted with great

regret, though with the hope that my future residence being at no great distance I should occasionally see them again. As regards the coloured people, I had much touching evidence of their sorrow at the loss of one of their few sympathisers among the dominant race, and this enabled me to feel that I had done for them at least some little good, and that my five years in the colony had not been altogether thrown away.

I left Guiana early in May, 1869, my pleasure at getting away from the colony being enhanced by the feeling that I should henceforward be, comparatively speaking, my own master, and that there would be now before me an opening for ambition and the chance of doing some good work of more than merely temporary effect.

But little as I guessed it at the moment of my departure, Destiny had already ordained that I was to return to the scene of my five years' official labours in Guiana.

The cause of my return was singular and my sojourn brief—almost dramatic; but it was to mark what up to that moment was the most impressive page of my public career.

CHAPTER IX

Rising of coolies in British Guiana—My letter to Lord Granville as to causes of discontent; its composition under pressure—Appointment of Royal Commission to inquire into Guiana immigration system—During visit to Trinidad suffer from concussion of the brain; my nervous system permanently injured—Proceed to Guiana to attend Commission—Am boycotted—Postponement of Commission—I return to St. Lucia—Sympathy of friends—Return again to Guiana—Mr. Jenkins, author of *Ginx's Baby* —Embarrassed by crowds of coolies—My difficulties—Governor's passive obstruction—My examination by Commission—Helplessness against libels —Report of Commission satisfactory.

I HAD been some seven months at my new post studying a new set of problems and engaged in a new round of duties, when information came to me that there had been a rising among the coolies in Guiana, and the Governor, in apprehension of more extended disturbance, had applied to the General at Barbados for additional troops. This news caused me much perturbation of spirit. What I had long feared had, or was about to, come to pass; the oppressed had risen against those who, either rightly or wrongly, they regarded as oppressors. Believing that I knew at least some of the causes of discontent, I felt keenly that I ought to disclose them; but though my position now enabled me to do so with some probability of practical effect, my time was, if possible, even more fully engrossed by immediate duties than it had been in Guiana. But after anxious consideration, I determined that I would write directly to Lord Granville, giving him my view of the causes of what appeared to be a very grave condition of affairs, and suggesting the directions in which remedies were to be sought. With no time for this purpose during the day, in order to catch the next outgoing mail, I had to

take many hours from my night's rest. When I came to face the subject I found myself in great difficulty for want of notes to refresh my memory as to dates, etc. For it may be imagined from the account of my life in Guiana that having insufficient time for obligatory duty, I had none whatever for a private diary, and I had also been compelled to forego almost entirely correspondence with friends and family in England. Moreover, I was at a distance from all official records; so that I was reduced to the necessity of giving my general impressions of the state of the colony with such illustrations of it as were possible from memory. My letter was for these reasons defective. Had I had more time at disposal, and in any case if I had had more experience of the higher official life, I could have written with equal force and effect, and yet with more prudent consideration for myself. But as it was, carried away by enthusiasm for the cause, and by the sense of urgency, I took no account of personal consequences, forgetting altogether that what was so real and true to my own mind might turn out to be very difficult of proof.

However, the letter was commenced, finished, and sent off within a few days of the arrival of the above news, and in order that it might be placed without the least delay under Lord Granville's own eye, I forwarded it to Lord Frederick Cavendish, who I knew to be on intimate terms with him, and who at once recognised its importance.

In the course of a few weeks the information reached me that my letter had had the effect desired: that a Royal Commission would be appointed to inquire into the treatment of immigrants in Guiana, and that I should be required to give evidence before it. I had at first unmixed gratification at the thought that the truth would at length be revealed; but I did not even then recognise the full effect of what I had written. Had I been told that my letter was, as *The Times* afterwards termed it, the severest indictment of public officers "since Hastings was impeached for tyranny over the Lord of the Holy City of

Benares and over the Ladies of the Princely House of Oude," I should have repudiated the statement with indignation; for I had intended, however imperfectly the intention was carried out, to attack not individuals, but a system. I felt that magistrates, doctors, and others were placed in a position in which impartiality was well-nigh impossible, and while I mentioned cases by way of illustration of my views, I gave no names and did not at the time contemplate the necessity of their ever being mentioned. The only exception was in the case of the Governors, whose designation could not be avoided. But even against them I had not a particle of vindictive feeling; and in the case of all others, even those who had been most embittered against me, I had no wish that they should suffer at all from the inquiry. I simply hoped that they would be taught by independent outside opinion what was due from them to a people towards whom they all stood in a quasi-fiduciary relation.

But that my hasty writing had permitted other views to be taken of my action I was soon to learn to my cost. As the Commission was not to meet for some months, and I was in a condition from overwork which imperatively required a change, I obtained leave of absence for a short visit to Sir Arthur Gordon (now Lord Stanmore), then Governor of Trinidad, whose views in respect of coolie immigration and the subject races generally were much in accord with my own, and who had already carried out in Trinidad some of the reforms which I desired for British Guiana. During this visit a fall from a horse caused me a concussion of the brain, which rendered me insensible for some eight hours. Sir Arthur Gordon and his private secretary, Mr. Arthur Gordon (now C.M.G.), who kindly watched the whole night by my bedside, informed me afterwards that I had, while entirely unconscious of my surroundings, talked incessantly, and chiefly about Newman's *Apologia*, which I had recently been reading; the thought of this book having been perhaps excited by the place in

which, as subsequently described, I had only a few months before met Charles Kingsley.

When I recovered consciousness, not only had I no knowledge of this talk, but memory of the events of the preceding weeks was almost completely extinguished, and was never altogether recovered. This, however, was of little consequence compared with another effect of the accident. My nervous system was so shaken that I found it impossible without great strain to maintain connected thought about any subject which caused me strong interest; and for months afterwards, including the whole period of my attendance upon the Commission, I suffered from insomnia, sometimes for many days together being deprived completely of sleep save that induced by narcotics. When proceeding some weeks afterwards to Demerara in order to attend the Commission, in passing Trinidad I stayed again for a night or two with Sir Arthur Gordon, who was on the point of quitting the island to assume the government of Mauritius.

On my arrival at Georgetown I found that the colony was, and had been for some months, in a state of intense excitement. Abuse of me had been poured out wholesale, and keepers of hotels and lodging-houses had been threatened with boycott if they presumed to receive me within their doors. Such indeed was the power of the dominant class over the livelihood of every person in the colony, whether white or coloured, above the rank of labourer, that it is doubtful whether I should have found a roof to cover me, if I had not been offered hospitality by one of the officers of the garrison, who were almost the only independent people in the colony.

My stay in Georgetown on this occasion was only of a few days' duration, as, delay having occurred in the formation of the Commission, the sittings were not expected to begin for some weeks. I therefore went back to my work in St. Lucia. On touching at Barbados I happened to mention my difficulty as regards lodging to the General in command of the troops, who at once kindly undertook to

provide for my accommodation on my return during any further time which I should require to spend in Demerara.

During the interval previous to my return, I heard that at the instance of an old Oxford friend, Walter Morrison, M.P. for Plymouth (and lately for the Craven Division of Yorkshire), the Aborigines Protection Society and the Anti-Slavery Society in combination had engaged a barrister to go out for the purpose of taking the part of the coolies before the Commission, Morrison himself having contributed a large sum towards the expense. This was only one of many instances of his unpublished munificence.

Besides this mark of sympathy from an old friend, I received another about this time from a newer one, in a letter from Arthur Gordon. Writing under date June 29th, 1870, from St. Thomas, when on board *The Elbe*, which was carrying him to England, he said—

"I write one line to tell you we are so far on our way and to wish you God-speed under your present difficulties. I am hearing you abused as I write, but I think you may get something out of ——, one of the magistrates. His wife's brother, a rather nice young fellow, is on board, and swears that what you say is true, though you may not be able to prove it, and that there are many in Demerara who rejoice at the Commission."

I give this extract in order to show that there was secret sympathy with my views on the part of at least one of the Demerara magistrates, though for obvious reasons he never dared to express it openly. In order to save him from the obloquy and danger which would ensue from honest testimony of the kind which he was obviously able to give, or from the temptation to dishonestly suppress it, I never called this officer as a witness, nor made any approach to him with a view to gain his evidence, though, as will be seen, such support was at one time very grievously required.

On reaching Georgetown again I found that Mr. Edward Jenkins, the barrister above referred to (well known as the author of *Ginx's Baby*), had arrived more than a week before me. He had already visited several sugar plantations,

and having been much feasted by the planters, appeared to have been somewhat biassed towards their side of the question at issue. In view of the torrent of slander which was being poured upon my devoted head, he would scarcely have been human if he had not been. I should mention, moreover, that in the several months which had elapsed since the announcement of the Commission, the planters had made great exertions and had expended large sums (estimated at the time in hundreds of thousands of pounds) with a view of improving the estates for the inspection of the Commission. Hospitals were enlarged and improved, water-tanks erected, coolie barracks built or improved, and yards cleansed, so that, as Mr. Crosby and others informed me, some of the inferior estates had had their aspect entirely altered.

In view of this outward appearance of comfort in the coolie surroundings, I should probably have had greater difficulty in persuading Mr. Jenkins that something was rotten in the state of Denmark, but for the crowds of immigrants who, from the moment of my arrival, came from all parts of the colony to besiege me with their complaints. In truth, the continual pressure of these people proved to be a very serious embarrassment. From earliest dawn they began to collect round the little house which I occupied on the Crown reserve adjoining the barracks, and whenever I showed my face there came a great cry of supplication, touching to hear, but impossible to satisfy. When I went out I was followed, and during all the hours of daylight I was left no peace. I did not apply to the police, partly because I knew that the chiefs of the force were, or were obliged to pretend to be, as bitter against me as the rest of the white population, and chiefly because I dreaded the rough treatment of the men who had come looking to me for help. Some of those who had come long distances seemed to be exhausted with fatigue and want of food; and my slender purse was continually being drained to supply what appeared to be very urgent want. Possibly,

and even probably, much of this was feigned to excite commiseration; but time was wanting for inquiry, even were it possible, and I could not discriminate between deserving and undeserving. Mr. Jenkins and I, assisted by his clerk, took down very many of their statements; not that I held them of much value, but rather with a view of preventing a sense of complete disappointment. Even if the Commissioners were unable to investigate the individual complaints, the general tenour of these might prove useful as clues for inquiry. Moreover, I had the hope, which proved to be justified, that the apparently universal sense of injustice might have some effect, not only upon them, but upon Mr. Jenkins, who, as before mentioned, was not at first by any means enthusiastic for the cause which he had come to advocate. Stories of ill-usage, arbitrary cutting of wages, improper refusal of admission to hospital, ejection from it involving obligation to work before complete cure, denial of comforts ordered by the doctor, forcible turnings out from dwellings to work, together with the utter uselessness of appeal to the magistrates, came from all parts of the colony and were reiterated *usque ad nauseam*. Probably there was much exaggeration, but that considerable reality lay beneath all this alleged grievance, could hardly be doubted. But however this may have been, they took up nearly the whole of my time, and left scarcely any for work useful to the Commission.

But even with more leisure I doubt whether I could have been very useful in this direction. Though, with great effort and much patience, I could manage to take down a statement, a brain weary with sleeplessness and shattered nerves rendered me almost incapable of connected thought.

Fortunately the feeling that, whatever happened to myself, some good must come, and, indeed, already had come, from my action, sustained me against the depressing sense of isolation. For that isolation was almost complete. The Governor had taken no notice of my official call; and

though, after persistent application, he permitted me to have access to the books containing the list of cases which had been tried before me, he made not the slightest offer of assistance, and I felt it to be hopeless to have made, or to make myself, those searches of records which were necessary for the complete presentation of my case. As regards others than the Governor, a few friends and sympathisers came to me in secrecy and under cover of night; but, with the exception of Mr. Crosby and a merchant named Perot, not a single white person, and very few others except coolies, dared to visit me in the daytime. Even among the officers of the garrison, with whom I messed, there were one or two whose remarks or silence showed antagonistic sentiments. For my friend Herbert had unfortunately left the colony, and the commanding officer who had succeeded him was as unlike him in feeling on this point as in every other respect.

Mr. Perot was at this time regarded as the first merchant in the colony. Other firms may have done larger business, but no single man at that time had such credit, or was in a position of equally complete independence. Though he had intimate business and social relations with the planters of the West Coast, his friendly attitude towards me in no way altered in consequence of my differences with them. He recognised, almost as well as Mr. Crosby, the substantial truth of my allegations, and though I had never been intimate with him, he knew me well enough to be indignant at the general attitude assumed towards me, and at the anonymous libels directed against my character. And now, alone among the upper unofficial world, he had the courage, at whatever cost to himself, to outrage the popular sentiment by showing me open countenance; and my breakfasts under his hospitable roof are among the very few agreeable memories of an otherwise most painful experience.

At the opening of the Commission I appeared as the first witness, and the ordeal through which I had to pass was indeed a severe one. Including the Commissioners, white

persons occupied the whole space in front of me, among whom I could recognise, besides Mr. Crosby, only one other friendly face.[1] And now my rash offer of proof recoiled upon me with a vengeance. For having determined to take no personal part against anyone, and neither to call nor cross-examine any witnesses, I, for this and other reasons above indicated, had little evidence to offer beyond my own bare word. Even as to this my physical and mental condition was such as to render it very far from being as forcible as it might have been. Not desiring to hurt individuals, I refrained from saying much which was likely to do so, having full confidence in the character of the two principal Commissioners that their investigation would bring out the general correctness of my views, whatever might be said in mitigation or disproof of my specific allegations.

By this very uncomfortable position my nervous state was naturally not improved, and my thoughts became so confused that I sometimes failed to understand the simplest questions. My examination lasted, I think, three days altogether, and though I remained in the colony several weeks, in case I should be wanted again, I did not further attend the sittings of the Commission.

The latter portion of my sojourn was even less agreeable. The pressure from crowds of coolies continued, and I was depressed by the sense of personal failure. Mr. Jenkins, whose assurance of the final success of our cause had latterly done much to comfort me, was obliged to leave the colony; and immediately after, perhaps in consequence of, his departure there issued from the local Press a series of anonymous libels against my character and conduct, even more gross than any that had previously appeared. But while the falsity of these attacks was on a par with their malice, I was absolutely defenceless. Their authors knew perfectly well that, even if there might be individual men brave enough to take the side of truth and justice,

[1] That of Mr. Darnell Davis, the Secretary to the Commission, now Auditor General of British Guiana.

no Guiana jury would ever render a verdict in my favour. Yet the bitterness of my enemies was such as to render absolutely certain that these charges, if just, would long previously have been brought to official notice, instead of being made anonymously in the newspapers, and the fact that this course was not taken would, I considered, reveal their untruth to any impartial mind. But, apart from the truth or untruth of these imputations (which, being made in the principal organ of the planters, must undoubtedly have been favoured if not originated by their executive committee), only the blindness of passion could fail to see their specially gross indecency under the circumstances, and that their publication during the sitting of the Commission was a serious tactical mistake. Abuse of the plaintiff's attorney is always held to be an indication of a weak case, and I think it probable that this consideration rendered the investigations of the Commission even more searching than they would otherwise have been, and thus tended to its generally satisfactory result.

When some months afterwards the Report of the Commission reached me in St. Lucia I, though expecting much from two of the members, was yet agreeably surprised by the thoroughness with which the work had been done. It is true that as regards myself the Commissioners did not spare censure wherever such was possible, while, as *The Times* pointed out in its review of Mr. Jenkins' book, *The Coolie: His Rights and Wrongs*, they ignored altogether how much they were indebted to me for the direction of their lines of inquiry, and in how many respects the facts elicited by them proved the justice of my representations. But when they expressed the opinion that the planters had extricated themselves from "dear bargains" with Chinese immigrants in a manner not creditable to the colony; when they pointed out how Governor A. had gradually withdrawn all power from the officer charged with the protection of the immigrants; when they reported the universal want of confidence among the coolies in the administration

of justice by the magistrates; when they recommended for valid reasons that the doctors should be rendered independent of the states and be made public officers; when they showed how completely the state of the law put every indentured immigrant at the mercy of an unscrupulous employer; that there was "here and there excessive indulgence in the practice of arbitrary stoppage of wages"; that various arrangements necessary for the well-being of the coolies were in some cases extremely defective, and that when these defects were pointed out to the Executive, extreme weakness had been shown in enforcing remedies—they had brought to light more than I expected and almost as much as I desired.

Thus ill as was performed my part in this coolie question, I have never for a moment regretted that I undertook it. It involved a heavy cost to me in health which never recovered its former robustness, and it probably contributed largely to the long delay in my promotion. But I have always felt compensated by the thought that the improvements in legislation and the increase of executive vigilance not only in Guiana, but in Mauritius and several other colonies which resulted directly or indirectly from this Commission, must have added at least something to the comfort and happiness of several hundreds of thousands of indentured immigrants.

With my attendance on the Commission my connection with British Guiana came to an end. Though life on the coast was always distasteful to me, I have often looked back to my experiences in the interior with a wistful regret that they could never be renewed. Despite all the drawbacks of solitude, of disagreeable work, of insect and other pests and of general discomfort, there was to me, as a lover of nature, a fascination about the tropical forest which has created a continual desire to return to it. Often in after years have I had a longing, now, alas! never to be gratified, to visit again the scenes described above, and to pursue at leisure the investigation of the wonders there present

in such special abundance, with which I never had time or opportunity for more than a very superficial acquaintance.[1]

[1] If my enthusiasm on the subject should be at all shared by any of my readers, let me recommend them to a book, *In the Guiana Forest*, by Mr. James Rodway, F.L.S. The work of a trained observer and most graphic writer, it conveys more vivid impressions of the scenes described, and presents pictures more attractive, than any which have appeared since Waterton's *Wanderings*. Also as of exceptional interest may be mentioned the more recent work of Mr. E. im Thurn, who seems in later days to have equalled, if not surpassed, my friend McClintock in his knowledge of the Guiana interior and its inhabitants.

ST. LUCIA

ST. LUCIA

CHAPTER I

Visit Barbados—Mr. Rawson, Governor-in-Chief—Government of "Constitutional" and Crown Colonies—Arrival in St. Lucia—Government House and its surroundings—My home life there—Inquiry into the administration of justice, and its result—Suspension of magistrate and resignation of other officers—Chaotic condition of Registry: its cause: remedy applied—Mr. F. Grey, magistrate: his unpopularity with planters: his untimely death by an accident and his gallant conduct on the occasion—Extraordinary feeling shown at the funeral and its cause.

ON my way to St. Lucia[1] I paid a visit to Barbados, in order to see Mr. Rawson, who, as Governor of the Windward Islands, was my immediate chief. Learning from him that my commission had not been received from England, I accepted his hospitable invitation to stay at Government House until its arrival.

The three weeks of my sojourn there were agreeable, and afforded me a much-needed rest. I took the opportunity, too, of reading many despatches and papers relating to St. Lucia, and obtained valuable information as to the condition of the colony which I had been appointed to govern—a condition which appeared to be far from promising, either financially or otherwise.

Mr. Rawson was a most kindly, amiable man, who rarely made an enemy; or if so, the fault was not on his side. During the six years of my official connection with him I could hardly have wished for a better chief. In his private letters he gave me much prudent advice, and he allowed me such a free hand that I largely attribute to his generous

[1] The journey was previous to the occurrences described in last chapter, which, for the sake of more convenient arrangement, have been related out of chronological order.

attitude in this respect my success in clearing out a very hotbed of corruption and in restoring the island to a condition of comparative prosperity.

In undertaking the government of St. Lucia I made my first essay at work which afterwards became a familiar task. It is a common notion that the quantity of work required of a Governor increases in direct proportion to the importance of the colony governed. Evidences of this error among home authorities have, within my experience, been by no means wanting; and it was even shared by so great a man as Mr. Gladstone, according to the following story told by the late Sir William Gregory.

Sir William, who had just returned from Ceylon, met Mr. Gladstone in Pall Mall. The Prime Minister did not recognise him at first, but, after he had passed, called out to him, "Mr. Gregory, when are you going to publish your Aristophanes?" To which the reply was: "I have of late years been so occupied with public business that I have made very little progress." Mr. Gladstone: "How can you say that? You have only charge of a little island, whereas I in my present position always manage to give one or two hours a day to classical work." This reflection I venture to think unjust, and I have a confident belief that had even Mr. Gladstone been Governor of Ceylon, he would not have been able to fulfil the duties creditably without more time than he ordinarily gave to the work of governing Britain.

The fact is the work required from a Governor varies rather in inverse than in direct proportion to the importance of what is governed. The higher the place in the official hierarchy, the more capable as a rule are the subordinate workers; the lower the place, the greater is the amount of drudgery to be undergone by the administrator, who is obliged to do much which is ordinarily done by subordinate officers, and has also to exercise a much closer supervision over his assistants. In all Crown Colonies, moreover, small and large, the obligatory work

of the Governor is incomparably more severe than that of His Majesty's representatives in colonies under Constitutional Government (which, for the sake of convenience, I shall term Constitutional Colonies). The single exception is the Cape of Good Hope, where the Governor is also High Commissioner,[1] and as such a kind of Supreme Crown Governor of all British territory in South Africa outside the established colonies.

Although I have myself had charge only of one of the less important Constitutional Colonies, I have had opportunities in my career which ought to have rendered me as well equipped as it is possible to be for forming a judgment upon this point. Besides my governorship of four Crown Colonies, and apart from experience gained in Newfoundland, I have through intimate acquaintance with several "Constitutional" Governors learned exactly what, and how much, is required of them. Specially well did I know the late Lord Normanby,[2] to whom I paid visits in New Zealand—one of them of several weeks' duration. Though not a man of great ability, he had sound judgment, abundant tact, robust common sense, and an imperturbable temper. Want of means did not permit him to make the large expenditure from private resources by which recent Australian Governors have been distinguished; but though he never practised the art of popularity-hunting, it was easy to see in travelling with him, or in driving through the streets of Melbourne, that he had earned very general respect. By judicious and impartial dealing with opposing parties, he succeeded in calming the passions which had been excited to fever heat by the weakness of his predecessor, and was generally regarded as one of the best Governors who had presided over the colony. In citing Lord Normanby's experience, therefore, as to the amount of work required for the satisfactory

[1] This was written before the recent change.

[2] The second Marquis, successively Governor of Queensland, New Zealand, and Victoria.

administration of a Constitutional Colony, I cannot be far wrong, and I know from him that when he had spent two or three hours at his desk, he regarded it as a very exceptional day's work, and that there were many days when there was no obligatory duty at all to be performed.

Lord Normanby, with these qualities and character, was able to exercise considerable influence upon the conduct of affairs, and, similarly equipped, any other Governor might do likewise; but beyond this the Governor of the larger colonies has very little power. Though appointments to public offices are officially announced as made by him, he has no part in the selection of the officers, and he has no control over any one of them, except the secretaries and aide-de-camps who compose his personal staff. He cannot even order a new lock for a door of Government House without the authority of the Department of Works, though there may be a Legislative vote for the purpose. Even the power, nominally given him by his commission, to pardon prisoners or to commute for other punishment sentences of death, has now been virtually taken away; for he is instructed to consult in such cases the Executive Council, which, in Constitutional Colonies, practically involves the obligation to follow their advice. Indeed, beyond exercising discretion in his acts, writing, and public speeches, so as to avoid the slightest appearance of interference with politics or of favour to any particular party, he has really no responsibility whatever except at times of parliamentary crises. He has then merely to decide whether a vote in the Legislature adverse to the Government should be accepted as the will of the country. If he believes that it ought to be so accepted, he has to determine for whom he will send to form a new Ministry, as being most likely to command the strongest support. If, on the other hand, he thinks the matter doubtful, he accedes to the demand of the defeated Premier for a dissolution. Usually, the matter for decision in such cases is perfectly plain, and the term of office of many Governors is passed without the occurrence of any real difficulty.

In practice, therefore, the obligatory work of the Governor of a Constitutional Colony is confined within very narrow limits. He has to keep the Secretary of State acquainted with important events and the course of affairs in his Government, to correspond directly with the chief officers of the Army and Navy, to prepare occasionally a speech on the laying of a foundation stone, the opening of a bazaar, the inauguration of some philanthropic movement, or at a school prize-giving or some other social function, and he has to sign his name some hundreds of times each month to land grants and other public papers; that is all.

Very different is the case of a Crown Colony Governor. He concentrates in his own person all the power and responsibility which, in a Constitutional Colony, is shared between the Governor and all his Ministers. All and even more; for having usually the command of a majority in the Legislature, he has the power of passing any measures or making any laws which after discussion he feels to be expedient. On questions of serious moment he is instructed to consult his Executive Council, but he is not bound to follow their advice. What are regarded as questions of serious moment depend much on the calibre of the Governor. If he is a strong man, they are very few. The Governor is also personally responsible for the work of every department, not merely that of the Colonial Secretary, who is the mouthpiece of his decisions and acts as a buffer between him and correspondents, but the Treasury, Audit, Police, Gaols, Works, Hospitals, Medical, Post Office, and Native Departments. From several or all of these he receives papers daily, requiring minutes of his decisions, while his duties in respect of correspondence with the Secretary of State and with the chief officers of the Army and Navy are the same as in the case of a "Constitutional" Governor. He decides, moreover, about applications for leave of absence and on the provision to be made for the duties of the absent, and he has also the power of appointment to fill vacancies in every public office, from that of

Chief Justice to that of messenger or landing-waiter. True, such appointments are subject to the confirmation of the Secretary of State; but in practice they are never set aside in the case of the lower offices, and very rarely in those of medium status. Even in the case of the highest, when I had not desired the appointment of an outsider, and had made strong representations as to the fitness of the officer nominated, my recommendations were almost always, I think invariably, adopted.

Again, the responsibility of exercising the prerogative of mercy, which, as we have seen, is in the Constitutional Colonies now only nominally attached to the Governor, in the Crown Colonies falls practically on that officer alone. For though he is bound in graver cases, such as murder, to consult the Executive Council, the decisions of that body are usually (within my personal experience invariably) in accordance with the opinion of the Governor, who in any case may take the responsibility of acting contrary to the advice given.

For the benefit of any of my readers unacquainted with the modes of British colonial government, it may be well to explain here the cause of this great difference in the position of Constitutional and Crown Governors, and the exceptional power entrusted to the latter.

Though not formerly so, in these days Crown Government, with the exception of Gibraltar and Malta, exists only [1] in colonies where people of non-European races are in a great majority. To grant the suffrage to the latter under a Constitutional Government would be to render the position of Europeans precarious, if not altogether untenable. On the other hand, to confine the suffrage to a small community of Europeans would almost certainly be prejudicial to the interests of the majority. The form of Crown Government has therefore been devised in order to secure a fair treatment for both. While the Legislative Council consists principally of Europeans who, speaking

[1] Not in all such Colonies, the Cape and Natal being exceptions.

generally, are the better qualified for the position by education and intelligence, the Governor and his subordinate officials are given great power, and in Crown Colonies of a severe type a preponderating power, for the purpose of guarding the interests of the unrepresented, or almost entirely unrepresented, majority. Experience has shown that without this safeguard, or where this has been neutralised by weakness in the Executive, the Government is apt to become that of a narrow and selfish oligarchy. On the other hand, where the interests of the ruling and other classes are sharply divided, as is especially apt to be the case where the former become settlers simply with a view to make their fortunes and return to their homes, caring little or nothing for the future of the place of their temporary residence, the Governor may be so continually called upon by his duty to take the part of the unrepresented as to seem regardful of their interests alone. The Press in such colonies, commonly edited in the interest of the ruling class, may abuse him violently on this account; but consideration for his own peace and comfort, and (the value of a Governor being apt to be officially rated according to his ability to "keep things quiet") his self-interest also, render it morally certain that he will, however conscientious, do all possible, consistently with his duty, to appease those who are able, far more effectively than are the coloured races, to make their voice heard outside the colony.

The above explanation will, I hope, serve to justify much which would otherwise seem arbitrary in the action described in the following pages.

St. Lucia, the island which was to be the subject of my first essay at government, is some forty miles long with a maximum width of fifteen miles. In the small space of 240 square miles it contains many mountains, some of them nearly 3,000 feet in height, which were in my time, and probably are still, almost entirely covered with forest. Cultivation is confined to portions of the valleys in the neighbourhood of the sea, and to the plain of Vieuxfort,

at the extreme north-east of the island. The population in 1869, at the time of my arrival, was under 35,000, of which only about 900 were white, mostly of French descent, and habitually speaking the French language, the rest being all more or less of African blood, and using a French patois.

I arrived at the port of Castries, the capital, from Barbados early on the morning of July 12th, 1869. The views of the west coast of the island, as we steamed along it, seemed inexpressibly beautiful, even to an eye which had become accustomed to the richness of tropical scenery. The twin rock giants—the Pitons—which stand sheer out of the sea at the south-west extremity, with the peep of the town of Soufrière nestling between them at their base, the rich green of the forests covering the numerous mountains, varied by the lighter colour of the cane patches on their lower spurs and in the valleys separating them, together with the brilliant blue of the sea, presented altogether a picture never to be forgotten.

The harbour of Castries seemed almost equally striking as regards natural beauty, but the town with its wharf presented, on near approach, a very forlorn appearance.

Mr. Dix, the Treasurer, who had been administering the government since the departure of my predecessor, together with various officials and other leading colonists, came to greet me on board. On landing I was duly sworn in as administrator before the Executive Council. After making the acquaintance of many who came to pay their respects, and transacting some affairs requiring immediate attention, I rode up to the Government House on Morne Fortuné, by the steep bridle-path which ascends over 700 feet in less than half a mile. The coloured people gave me everywhere a kindly and respectful greeting, but without any of the touching enthusiasm which I experienced from them in after days.

Approaching the summit, one came upon a large open space, covered with long grass, on the nearest end of which

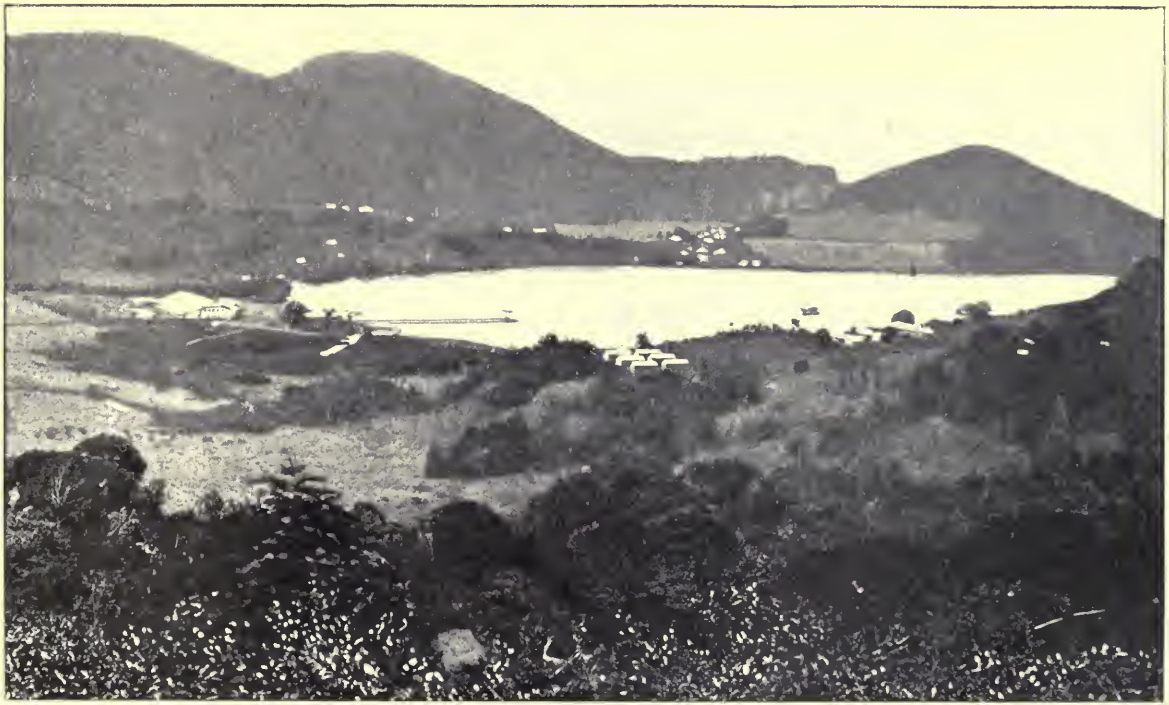
was Government House. The first sight of what was to be my home, off and on, for nearly nine years was not highly inspiriting. It had been built and, until the withdrawal of the garrison some years previously, had been used as a military hospital. It consisted of a main building of one storey, some fifty yards long, with a wing at either end, the one used for a kitchen and offices, the other for servants' rooms and stables. On each of the long sides of the main building was a covered stone gallery faced by brick arches. The construction of these, as of the house generally, was of the solidest, the walls being made to withstand hurricanes and being almost two feet thick. But this solidity, though no doubt useful for its purpose, had the effect of largely obstructing light, and would in any other than a very bright climate have caused the interior to be intolerably gloomy. It seems that the architect had gone to the extreme of safety in consequence of the disastrous hurricane of 1817, when the Government House was blown down and the Governor killed in its ruins. But while the house, on the whole, was capable of being made comfortable enough, the furniture was very dilapidated; the small garden, which was enclosed by a rusty iron railing running parallel to each side of the house and at a distance of only a few yards from it, was much neglected, while the long grass of the pasture around, being interspersed with wild guava bushes, showed that it had not been cleared for years. Judged by the appearance of its Government House and its surroundings, the condition of the island was indeed a wretched one.

In the afternoon, accompanied by Mr. Dix, I walked round the War Office reserve on which the Government House was situated. On the summit of the hill, which retains the old French name of Morne Fortuné, and at some fifty feet above the site of my residence, is the fort which was formerly the scene of much fighting between the French and English, and which, on the occasion of one of its captures by the English, had the Union Jack planted

on it by Her late Majesty's father, the Duke of Kent.[1] The buildings, occupied by police, were in fair condition, though showing the same neglected surroundings noticeable at Government House. Slightly below the same level were the old officers' quarters, a larger building of two storeys, with a gallery round each, at this time occupied as separate flats by the magistrate of the district, Mr. McLean, and the Superintendent of Police.

Close by was the old mess house, a building similar to Government House, though on a smaller scale, then occupied by Mr. Dix. Dining with him that first night I was not altogether surprised to hear from the ladies of his family that on several recent occasions they had found in their house snakes of the deadly species ("rat-tail," or *fer-de-lance*, or *lachesis lanceolatus*) which has given St. Lucia so evil a repute. As these snakes at that time were extremely abundant in the island, the risk of being bitten by one was considerable, and was greatly increased by the existence of a large space of uncleared land adjoining residences. This may be judged from the fact that when under my instructions the whole property was being cleared, the workmen killed some forty of these snakes, many others having escaped. While this process was going on, one morning within the first month of my residence, on getting up I found one of the reptiles, about two and a half feet long, under my bed. Cast snake-skins were several times found in the cellar and hurricane house, which were below the level of the surrounding ground; but never after this during the whole of my residence did I see or hear of another of these creatures getting into the house; and so this one must have been frightened by the unaccustomed disturbance of his haunts. Yet Mr. Dix's household, though suffering much less than previously, by no means enjoyed this complete immunity. My native servants would rarely move about the galleries at night without a light; and though I sometimes did so in moon-

[1] The English expedition on this occasion was commanded by Sir Charles (the first Earl) Grey, whose second son married my aunt.



Central Factory

CUL-DE-SAC VALLEY
(TAKEN FROM MORNE FORTUNÉ)

I. —*Face p.* 152

light, I was never sure what was lurking in the shadow of the pillars.

The view on both sides of the house largely compensated for the want of cheerfulness near at hand. On the south side one looked down upon the valley of Grand Cul-de-sac, with a high-peaked mountain at its eastern end and the blue ocean at the other. Beyond, it was bordered by a hill somewhat higher than the Morne, and beyond that were several lines of mountains, the green of their covering foliage becoming gradually blue with distance, and the peaks of the Pitons just showing above a depression in a nearer range. The hill on the other side of the Cul-de-sac valley runs out into the sea and forms with the spurs of the Morne an almost landlocked bay, at the further side of which were visible the buildings of a small plantation surrounded by the light green which betokens canes and always presents a strong contrast to the darker hues of other vegetation.

On the northern side of the house a shoulder of the Morne, covered with pasture, shut out the view of the town and most of the harbour at its foot; but the Vigie promontory, with its fort, on the further side of Castries Bay, was just visible; while beyond was the curved outline of the Anse de Gros Isle, with the island itself at the further end, under the shelter of which Rodney and (on one occasion) Nelson kept watch upon the French fleets lying at Fort Royal (now Fort de France), Martinique. On most fine days was visible the profile of the whole west coast of that island, and also the Diamond Rock—once manned and equipped as a British man-of-war—while in exceptionally clear weather, which occurred two or three times a year before heavy rain, there could be seen what looked like a round rock in the sea, and in fact was the summit of the highest peak in Dominica, over a hundred miles distant.

Being entirely unprovided with the personal staff which does so much to relieve the isolation of the Governor's position in the larger colonies, the greater portion of my time was passed in solitude, which only abundant and

absorbing work rendered tolerable. For it must be understood that, even if he has any desire in that direction, the Governor of a Crown Colony cannot—or ought not to—become intimate with any of the residents. If he does make a friend he is certain sooner or later to have to decide something which brings into conflict his friendship and his public duty. Questions which come up for his decision are so various as to render it probable that in the course of a few years there will have been one or more affecting almost every one of the educated inhabitants; questions of discipline and conduct in the case of public officers; questions respecting forfeitures by the Customs affecting merchants and traders; questions about the treatment of indentured and other labourers concerning planters, and about the remission of fines and penalties which may possibly affect anyone from the highest to the lowest. Again, for every vacancy in office there are several, sometimes many candidates, the appointment of any one of whom will not improbably offend all the others and their backers. Under these circumstances it is obvious that any decision, however impartial it may be, in favour of one with whom the Governor is on terms of exceptional intimacy is sure to be put down to favour, and a loss of respect is incurred in consequence. But apart from all this, the friendship of the possessor of so much local power is so eagerly sought by those who hope to gain something from it, that if accorded to one it is certain to cause heartburning in others who consider themselves equally entitled to it; and this last consideration alone, as I learnt directly from Lord Normanby and Sir William Jervois, has induced the best Governors of even Constitutional Colonies to preserve a "splendid" but by no means altogether agreeable "isolation."

I recognised the necessity for such isolation from the first; but how complete it was to be, in a small colony such as St. Lucia, I was quickly to learn from painful experience. Of the sort of life which I led, the following will give a sufficient idea. Rising usually at six o'clock, and some-

times owing to sleeplessness much earlier, I then dealt with the papers which had come up the evening before. Between ten and eleven o'clock, about four days in the week, I rode down to town to superintend the work in the Colonial Secretary's office and to receive those who desired to see me on business. Being Colonial Secretary as well as Administrator, assisted by only two very young clerks, I had to read over carefully every letter written from my minutes to make sure that an unconscious turn of phrase did not convey a different meaning to that intended, or render the tone less courteous than was desirable. As I was at that time Registrar also, it was necessary that I should go frequently into the Registry to observe how the work was progressing, and also to make occasional visits to other offices, such as the Treasury and Audit Office. Sometimes, also, I paid surprise visits of inspection to the gaol and to the different asylums, of which one was for the poor and others for lunatics and Yaws patients (there being then no hospital on the island).

The necessary day's work done, before going home I usually rode a few times round the top of the Morne, that being the only level spot within easy reach for a gallop. Except on the two or three nights a week when I had guests, I passed the evening alone in reading or in work of an immediately pressing nature. On bright moonlight nights I often spent much time in walking up and down the fifty yards of gallery on either side of my house pondering on the work in hand or to be undertaken. The glorious panorama of stars which is there presented reminds me of the curious ignorance in England that in the tropics are visible at one hour or another of the night all the principal stars of both hemispheres. From my house in St. Lucia, while the Great Bear and the whole sky familiar to Englishmen were to be seen from the north gallery, there were also visible from the south gallery the Southern Cross, the two great stars in Centaurus pointing to it, Canopus, Sirius, the Scorpion, and all the principal constellations of the southern hemisphere.

Heavy official work soon loomed in front of me, enough to occupy all my thoughts and to relieve the dullness of my surroundings. For a few days after my arrival in the colony statements were made to me about the conduct of the Chief Justice of so extraordinary a nature that it was impossible to ignore them. Accordingly, when I found that they were confirmed in several quarters apparently trustworthy, on application to Mr. Rawson, I obtained from him a Special Commission for inquiry into the administration of justice, enabling me to examine witnesses under oath.

No sooner was this Commission announced in the Government *Gazette* than the Chief Justice at once applied to retire from the service on pension.

I was, of course, unable to accept a resignation offered under such circumstances; but I was compelled immediately afterwards to permit the judge to leave the island on leave of absence, in consequence of an extraordinary medical certificate to the effect that, unless I did so, he would probably commit suicide!

The inquiry, being thus conducted in the Chief Justice's absence, could have no final result. The examination of witnesses, too, was attended by an unexpected difficulty in their extreme reluctance to depose on oath to what they had freely stated in private. A few, however, proved to be more courageous, and after some weeks I was enabled to send home a report, upon which was framed charges against the Chief Justice of (1) corruption, (2) drunkenness, and (3) indebtedness to the practitioners in his court. These charges were tried by a Commission specially appointed under instruction from the Secretary of State, and consisting of officers unconnected with the colony. In the absence of the Chief Justice he was represented by counsel. All the charges were proved, and it was thus rendered impossible for the judge to resume his office. It was indeed most unfortunate that he should have been permitted to remain so long in it, as apart from the demoralising effect of his example which was observable in many directions, the

colony had in at least one respect suffered heavy material loss from his utter want of control over the practitioners in his court.

Returns obtained by me of the costs allowed on the judicial sale of the real property of deceased or bankrupt persons, showed that of the twenty-eight properties so sold in recent years, twenty-seven per cent. of the proceeds had been consumed in costs; that excluding the large estates, the proportion was forty-four per cent., and that in the case of some very small holdings the whole proceeds were thus swallowed up, the creditors having obtained nothing at all. Real property had thus become almost no security for money, and the use of credit for agricultural development had practically ceased. It was scarcely necessary to look beyond this for the cause of the extreme depression which I found existing in the island.

From testimony elicited in this inquiry, it appears that once the judge, having tried a man for burglary, solemnly addressed him on conviction as though his offence had been rape, and that there were several other cases of a similar kind. An advocate had addressed the opposing counsel as, "Ah, *vieux coquin!*" to which the angry retort was, "*Et toi, voleur!*" without rebuke by the bench.

Some ten years before this time the same judge had been formally accused of drunkenness, and though the principal offence was, I was assured, committed in the sight of a great number of witnesses, the accused was acquitted. Hence the impunity which he had enjoyed in the interval and the reluctance to give evidence on the present inquiry for fear of a similar abortive result.

While the case against the Chief Justice was still pending, a despatch arrived containing an application from the judge for a pension on retirement. The mere forwarding of the application by the Secretary of State implied that the grant of a pension would not have been disapproved. I was still more surprised when, after the receipt of the Commissioners' report, a further application was forwarded

to me by the Colonial Department for the grant of a compassionate allowance to the offender's family. I laid both applications before the Legislative Council without comment, and in no way attempted to influence the judgment even of the official members. Though not without a strong feeling of compassion for the unfortunate sufferers from the judge's misconduct, I felt that his misdoings had already cost the colony so much as to render any grant indirectly benefiting him undesirable. But I felt much more strongly that any such action on the part of the Legislature would, in the general indifference to misconduct and corrupt proceedings brought about by this judge's example, serve as a powerful and very harmful counterpoise to the deterrent effect caused by his removal from office. The evil from which the island was suffering was not fully appreciated at home, and it is doubtful whether it could have been adequately conveyed by despatches. Both applications were rejected.

It is indeed scarcely conceivable that in the latter half of the nineteenth century there could have existed in a British colony such a state of things as was revealed by this inquiry and disclosures subsequently made.[1]

[1] Earlier in the century there had been almost equally strange occurrences both in St. Lucia and other of the West Indian colonies. Here, for instance, is a story which came to me as having been told by Sir Frederick Rogers (afterwards Lord Blatchford), who had been for many years Permanent Under Secretary for the Colonies. The Government had for a long time been desirous of abolishing the legislative system of the Virgin Islands, in which diminutive community there had been established an absurd copy of the British Constitution, consisting of a Governor and two legislative chambers. However, all attempts in this direction had failed until there occurred the following event. The Speaker of the House of Assembly having entrusted his mule to a coloured boy while the House was in session, the animal was found afterwards in a condition which showed that it must have been severely galloped in the interval. The Speaker brought this circumstance to the notice of the House, which promptly voted it to be a breach of privilege, and the boy's father was fined some dozens of rum. The fine being paid and the spirits brought to the House, the unofficial members tested them so freely that the Government members, previously in a hopeless minority, were able to pass measures for the abolition of the Constitution and the establishment of a single legislative chamber. This story having come to me at second hand, I cannot vouch for its exact correctness, but I do not doubt that there was substantial foundation for it.

The judge's example had not been without imitators. Before the end of the year 1869 it was my painful duty to gazette the dismissal from office of one of the magistrates, his offence being misappropriation of the funds entrusted to him for the payment of paupers.

Among the various offices at that time held for economy's sake by the Administrator, was that of Registrar. The Administrator was thus constituted an officer of the Supreme Court, which was presided over by his subordinate, the Chief Justice, and it is a matter for surprise that so anomalous an arrangement had not been the occasion of public scandal.

On examining the Registry I found all of some nine or ten registers in a condition of almost complete neglect. In order to explain what was thus involved, I should mention that the Registrar included among his duties, not only the functions usually discharged by the Registrar of the Supreme Court and by the Registrar-General of Births and Deaths, but also those appertaining to the registration of deeds, mortgages, and judgments affecting real property. For the latter purpose there were kept books according to the French system, in one of which all such documents were recorded at length, while in another there was an index of names with references to the other book. By these registers, when properly kept, it was possible to ascertain in a few minutes all valid incumbrances against any given property and also to a considerable extent the pecuniary position of the owner. Noticing that the last entries in these books were of somewhat ancient date, I innocently remarked that apparently transactions in real estate had recently been of rare occurrence. In reply my attention was drawn to a heap of documents, two or more feet high, which I then found had been during many months past lodged for registration, but had not been entered in the books. Though I had already observed apathy and its effects on all sides, I had not before appreciated its full extent. For, owing to this neglect of duty, any one

desiring to ascertain the incumbrances on a property would require not only to search the registers, but also to make careful examination of this great heap of papers; so that his task, instead of only a few minutes, would occupy several hours. The reason that this state of things had not at once been brought to my notice probably was that the searches were usually made by lawyers who were paid according to the time occupied, joined to the fact that the Deputy-Registrar was a popular man, who had no doubt been in his time an efficient officer. He had, however, of recent years been imitating his legal chief in habits of insobriety, and as my predecessor had taken no notice of it or its effects, it was hardly to be expected that the officer who acted during the interregnum would do so. Thus was the condition of the office fully accounted for.

Measures of remedy were at once undertaken by the employment of extra clerical assistance under the chief clerk of the Government office, who was also acting as my private secretary. The Deputy-Registrar's ill-health still continuing, no steps could be taken for his suspension; but all difficulty on this point was shortly removed by the unhappy termination of his career from the effects of drink. The two I have mentioned were only the first of many similar instances which occurred within my experience; and while I cordially accord all due credit to Dr. Manson, Sir William MacGregor, and others, who are endeavouring to discover, with a view to destroy, the source of malaria—from which I myself have been so great a sufferer—I feel that even greater honour should be paid to one who finds some effective remedy for the drink craving to which Europeans are specially subject in the tropics. For malaria only destroys physical health, while undue drinking affects both mind and body, and, as I have seen in many instances, paralyses the moral sense in men who, previous to indulgence of the habit, were strictly honourable.

The measures for restoring order to the Registry being successful, the Secretary of State in due course expressed

his appreciation of the manner in which the work had been done "without entailing additional expenditure on the colony."

Official misconduct, which I do not doubt was largely caused by the impunity so long enjoyed by the Chief Justice, was by no means confined to the cases above mentioned, and my time during my first year of administration was largely occupied with its investigation. As the result, besides the dismissal of several subordinates, three other superior officers were compelled to resign their appointments, viz. the chief, and practically the only, medical officer, the chief revenue officer, and a member of the Executive and Legislative Councils.

The medical officer was leniently dealt with by the Secretary of State in the first instance, and, after I had suspended him, was restored to office with a severe reprimand and the loss of some months' salary. His comparative impunity, however, proved to be an encouragement to misconduct; and I was again proceeding for his suspension, when he resigned and again appealed to the Secretary of State. According to information received from Mr. Rawson, this appeal was very near being as successful as the former one, and I should have again had him back upon my hands but for a fortunate circumstance which revealed clearly what ought to have been apparent before.

Having made complaint that he was insufficiently provided with surgical instruments, I had instructed him to make a requisition for what he required. This was forwarded to the Secretary of State, who submitted it to an eminent surgeon with tropical experience. The verdict was, I believe, that the requisitionist must have been out of his mind. He had apparently copied out almost the whole trade list of Mr. Weiss, the celebrated maker of surgical instruments, including many articles which could not be required, and some quite unsuitable for use in the tropics.

The officer's appeal was in consequence unsuccessful

and his resignation accepted. I never heard what became of him afterwards, but, as he was a competent surgeon, I do not doubt that in other than a tropical climate he was capable of useful service.

The member of the Executive and Legislative Councils above referred to was discovered to be defrauding the Excise in connection with his rum distillery. This practice had seemingly been of long continuance, having escaped detection owing to what I will charitably suppose to have been mere carelessness on the part of the chief revenue officer, whom I had caused to resign shortly before this discovery was made. I may mention that this revenue officer had, most improperly, been permitted to own a sugar plantation, and thus to be himself interested in rum manufacture in the very district in which he was charged with the Excise supervision.

Only a few weeks after my arrival in the colony there came also to it Mr. F. Grey, who had been appointed stipendiary magistrate by the Secretary of State. The coincidence was a singular one, considering how few of the officers in the island were British born. For I had known him from childhood, even before he went to Charterhouse, where he was for some years my fag, and he had been one of the several small boys who had joined in giving me a present of books on my leaving for Balliol. He was a son of the Mrs. Grey, author of various novels (such as *The Gambler's Wife*), formerly of considerable repute; his father, long dead, having been colonel of the Scots Greys. Knowing something already of the condition of the Second District, to which I found it necessary to appoint him, I felt sure that one who had had the training of an English gentleman would experience similar difficulties to those which had rendered my life so painful in Guiana; and though, not to discourage him at the outset, I did not warn him of this, he very quickly made the disagreeable discovery for himself that, apparently in accordance with the practice of previous magistrates, he was expected to mete a different "justice" to different classes.

Such being the condition of things, collision between Grey and the planters was almost certain to occur, and I was not at all surprised when complaints against the new broom reached me from various persons, all of them leading planters. He proved, however, to be an excellent public officer, and assisted me greatly with information suggestive of the many reforms which were carried out in the following and subsequent years. His residence was at Soufrière, between which town and Castries passage could then be made only by open boat on a sometimes very rough sea (the asthmatic steam launch which was afterwards put upon the route not having yet been purchased).

Though the time which was thus required for the journey to and fro precluded me from seeing Grey often, I always felt that he was one of the extremely few on whom I could entirely rely, while, owing to our early associations, I had much more in common with him than anyone else in the island. Imagine, then, what I suffered by his untimely death, which occurred after a service of little more than a year. He had come up to stay with me for the Christmas of 1870, and had, early one morning, gone out for a boating excursion to Gros Islet—at the extreme north-west of the island. The boat belonged to a merchantman in the harbour, and was in charge of its captain with his sailors at the oars. In spite of these apparently safe conditions, the boat was upset, and all on board, including the captain, were drowned, with the exception of Mr. Chadwick, the chief of the island police, and one sailor. Mr. Chadwick afterwards related to me that Grey, being a weak swimmer, had been invited by him to put his hand on his (Chadwick's) shoulder. As the distance to shore was a long one, Chadwick was at length becoming exhausted himself, when Grey, observing this, said: "I won't drown you, old fellow. Good-bye," and taking away his hand immediately went under, never to be seen again alive.

Hearing of the accident by special messenger, I rode down at once from the Morne and found that two bodies,

that of Grey being one of them, had already been recovered, and that efforts were being made to revive them. Under my direction these efforts were continued for several hours, according to the various modes prescribed for such cases. All, however, in vain.

The funeral took place next day, as is necessary in such climates, and the news of what had occurred having reached the extremities of the island the same night, people collected from all parts to attend it. I was glad to see among them several planters who had learned to respect the man—however much they differed from his view of duty. But what was much more remarkable, was the attendance and demeanour of the coloured people. Some two thousand of them followed this but newly arrived Englishman to his grave—many of them crying. A very large proportion of them had come from Soufrière, and would have lost one or two days, besides what was, to poor people, the heavy cost of passage and of maintenance away from home. The cause of this display of feeling was not far to seek. As was said to me at the time by an intelligent black man, "He, for the first time, showed us what was the meaning of justice." The incident seemed to indicate clearly that, in the Second District at all events, there had before Grey's advent been justification for the significant proverb which is common to the coloured people of St. Lucia and Martinique: "Ravette ne tini raison douvant poule," *ravette* being the French-Creole name for the West Indian cockroach and the fowl its principal enemy. For the sake of those who are unacquainted with the Creole French, I may mention that "tini" is equivalent to and probably a corruption of *tient*, while "douvant" is *devant*. The cockroach is intended to represent the black man, the fowl the white man.

I may mention here, as having occurred more than a year before Grey's death, an incident which shows how little will earn the gratitude of subject races who are accustomed to be treated as though they scarcely belonged to the *genus homo*.

One day, riding down from the Morne, I saw an old woman struggling in vain to put back on her head an enormous load of bananas and yams and other provisions which she had been carrying to market in Castries and had put down for a rest. There was no one but myself in sight, and so (as I presume every English gentleman would do) I at once got off my horse and assisted to return the load to its proper place. I thought nothing further of the matter until, some months afterwards, the incident was recounted to me with some exaggeration. It seems that the news spread all over the island and beyond, appearing even in print, and being actually recalled to me by the black editor of *The Creole* newspaper when I went to attend the Commission in Guiana some months afterwards. It seems to have been regarded as astonishing that such an act should have been done by any white man, and still more when he was the Governor. That so much should have been made of so little caused me reflections not wholly pleasant.

CHAPTER II

My increased isolation caused by preceding events—Governor-in-Chief's expressed sympathy—Poisonous snakes—Obtain vote for their destruction—Vote refused during my absence, but restored on my return—Remarkable decline of death-rate in consequence—Vote eventually dropped on account of persistent opposition—Introduction of mongoose—Mongoose *v.* snake at Government House—Testimony to value of measures twenty-two years afterwards—Curious story about original introduction of rat-tail—Visit of H.M.S. *Bristol*—Visit of Flying Squadron—Admiral Beauchamp Seymour and his discipline—Visit of Governor Rawson—Accompany him to Soufrière and Vieuxfort—St. Lucia feasts.

HOW much work, worry, trouble, and anxiety were caused to me by all the difficulties with leading public officers above described, and how little time was at my disposal for the careful writing of my letter to Lord Granville about the Guiana coolie question then raging in the sister colony will now be understood![1] All of the impeached officers had friends and relations, making together in a very small community a formidable band of opposition which made itself continually felt by attacks in the local Press and anonymous letters conveyed to my house. My chief, Mr. Rawson, fully appreciated my isolated position, and sympathising deeply with the exceptional difficulty, he not infrequently sent me by way of encouragement passages from his despatches in my favour. Thus, towards the end of January, 1870, he had addressed the Secretary of State as follows:—

"I cannot abstain from pointing to the demoralised condition of the public service in St. Lucia and to the anxious and painful duties which Mr. Des Vœux has had at his first start to perform, and which he has executed with laudable zeal, with much labour, both mental and physical, standing almost alone and surrounded

[1] See page 129.

by persons from whom he has received little assistance and sympathy. I have endeavoured to afford him mine, but he will be greatly encouraged by the expression of your lordship's approval of his exertions, and I hope you will consider him deserving of it. Your lordship will observe that he has lost no time in appointing a Commission to make inquiry into the management of the several institutions which were lately under Dr. ——'s charge."

In December, 1869, I succeeded after some opposition in obtaining a unanimous vote from the Legislative Council of £300 to be expended in rewards for the destruction of poisonous snakes, and I, at the same time, expressed the intention of making an attempt to introduce to the island the mongoose—the well-known enemy of the Indian cobra. The deaths from the bites from snakes were at this time about twenty-five each year, sometimes reaching to thirty, and owing to absence of registration it is almost certain that many were never reported. Taking the then population of St. Lucia at 35,000 and that of India at only 200,000,000, the same death-rate in the latter country would indicate the annual loss of 140,000 lives, an immeasurably greater number than is actually destroyed by snakes, tigers, leopards, and all other man-destroying creatures.

The rat-tail is reproduced in enormous numbers—ninety to one hundred at a single birth—and as the greater part of the island was covered with dense forest, the prospect of complete destruction was well-nigh hopeless; but it seemed by no means beyond possibility that in the settled districts these pests might be greatly reduced in number, and the attainment of this object, at all events, seemed to be worth attempting. For there was naturally great dread of these serpents on the part of all strangers, as well as most of the inhabitants, and thus the investment of money in local industries was hindered and the credit of the colony seriously injured. The vote in question was utilised by the offer of a reward of half a crown for every five heads, and the

effect of this may be gathered from the fact that the vote was quickly exhausted—12,000 heads having been purchased in seven months. In spite of this success, when the vote was again proposed by the Acting Administrator during my temporary absence in Guiana, it was strenuously opposed by the unofficial members. The merchants, as living in town, were never in danger, and resisted the measure on the ground of expense, while the planters regarded snakes chiefly as the enemy of rats which are destructive to sugar canes. The vote was consequently refused; but on my return to the colony I brought the subject forward again, and having after a prolonged discussion changed the view of Mr. John Goodman, the most influential and one of the most enlightened of the planters, I passed the vote by a majority. When on a subsequent occasion I was absent from the colony on leave, the vote was again refused, and I felt it useless to persevere in a measure which would almost certainly be defeated on my final departure. This was the more unfortunate, as though, owing to exhaustion and intermittence in the votes, the payment of rewards had been interrupted by several intervals, the number of deaths was steadily reduced: having been twenty-two in 1869, sixteen in 1870, and twelve in 1871.

As regards the mongoose, with the kind assistance of Dr. Sclater, I obtained some specimens from the Zoological Gardens, London. In order to test whether the natural instinct of snake-enmity survived in those bred in captivity, I caused an experiment to be tried in the grounds of Government House, when a mongoose was pitted against a live rat-tail some three feet in length. What occurred was described by me at the time in a paper written for the Zoological Society. The mongoose became much excited as soon as he caught sight of the snake, and there ensued an exciting combat which lasted for some minutes. The movements of attack and parry were too quick to be followed by the eye. At first the reptile appeared to have

the best of the fight, but eventually the mongoose, after being struck in the neck, running away, and feigning defeat, suddenly jumped on the snake's back and quickly made an end of him. My paper on the subject, I may add, caused a discussion in the *Field* newspaper as to whether the mongoose was proof against snake poison, this experiment apparently indicating that he is, as the snake succeeded in effecting a bite which had drawn blood.[1] The mongoose in the case in question had certainly no opportunity of obtaining a curative herb, to which the animal is said to have recourse when bitten; it did, however, feed on his conquered enemy, and consumed all of him—except the end of the tail—in the course of the next few days.

The usefulness of the animal being thus established, all the specimens received were turned out. At first the experiment seemed destined to fail. The mongoose unluckily likes chicken as well as snake—possibly prefers it—and the neighbours finding this out, came to me with piteous tales of losses thus caused. Sometimes feathers were brought to me by way of proof, which I began to suspect belonged to birds which had been eaten, not by the mongoose, but by their owners. Of this I at length became so confident that I refused further compensation, which up to then I had been making from my own pocket. After that, I heard no more of the mongoose or its ravages, and feared that all the animals imported had been destroyed. But they perhaps survived; for twenty-two years after my administration of the island had come to an end I came across the following:—

"The mortality from serpent bites was in 1898 reduced to one, from two in 1897. At the very start of registration in 1869 I had to chronicle twenty-two deaths from this cause. I have looked at the fluctuation and the diminution since, and I venture to affirm that the measure which Mr. (now Sir William) Des Vœux intro-

[1] The controversy was, I think, at length decided by doctors, who stated that mongooses had in several instances died quickly when cobra poison had been infused into their veins.

duced into the Legislature in the early seventies for the destruction of serpents by a payment for every head brought in, and the subsequent importation in large numbers of the mongoose—first brought to the colony by Sir William Des Vœux, who one day gave with it an object-lesson on the lawn of Government House—are the factors in the decrease of the mortality from twenty-two in 1869 to one in 1898. There were at the time differences of opinion as to the effectiveness of the former measure, but there is no question now as to the good which has resulted from the latter. For while the mongoose protects life by dealing destruction to all reptiles, it is the planters' best friend by ridding his canes of all rodents."[1]

It may be fairly claimed, then, that my preventive measures have saved several hundred lives, besides adding largely to the security of men—and canes.

It is remarkable that, though the whole of the Windward and Leeward Islands are believed to have once formed a continuous cordillera of which the mountain-tops alone remain above water, these poisonous snakes should be found in only two of them—Martinique and St. Lucia. If it be true, as I have been told, that they were originally imported some three centuries ago by the planters of Martinique, in order that the terror so caused might check the escape of their slaves, who frequently contrived to hide in the depths of the forest, what has long been a puzzle to naturalists would be explained.

Among the social events of the first year of my administration, that which remains most clearly in my memory is the visit to the harbour of Castries of Her Majesty's training ship *Bristol*, commanded by Captain Wilson. Besides the ordinary complement of officers she had on board some eighty naval cadets. I first entertained the captain and principal officers at dinner, and then asked all of the officers and the whole "society" of the island to a dance at Government House. On the appointed evening I was surprised and somewhat embarrassed by the arrival, some two hours before

[1] Report of the Registrar-General of St. Lucia, 1898.

guests were expected, of the whole of the cadets. It appears they had heard so much of the danger from snakes in the ascent of the Morne after dark that, not having sufficient lanterns, they had prudently come while there was sufficient daylight. The effect of such an inroad upon an unfortunate bachelor, with his preparations still unfinished, may be imagined. There happened, however, to be in the house a number of old card-tables, which had apparently not been used for many years. The boys helped me to get these out, and in the course of half an hour all were fully occupied. The dance proved to be a great success, there having been nothing like it for many years, and its effect was largely to diminish the bitterness caused by my action against the public officers.[1]

The *Bristol* gave me a dance in return, the whole of the quarter- and main-decks being covered in with flags. In spite of a heavy downpour of rain, the colonists enjoyed themselves greatly, and the entertainment proved highly successful.

It was also within the same period that the Flying Squadron, under the command of Admiral Beauchamp Seymour (afterwards Lord Alcester), visited the island and remained for two days. The ships raced from St. Vincent, which they had left the previous night, and were seen from my gallery early in the morning. As they approached the harbour under full sail in a strong breeze they were a sight never to be forgotten, and which now, alas! never will be seen again. Among the officers of the squadron who called at Government House I was specially glad to greet Captain (now Admiral Sir) F. Sullivan, then in command of the *Immortalité*, whom I had not seen since he left Charterhouse in 1858. In the evening Admiral Seymour and some

[1] Several of the boys who were my guests on this occasion were fated, alas! to perish in H.M.S. *Captain*, which foundered in the following year. Among them were Childers, son of the Cabinet Minister, then First Lord of the Admiralty, and Herbert, son of the even better known Mr. Sidney Herbert and brother of the late Lord Pembroke.

of his officers came to dinner, and the Admiral stayed overnight. I had observed before sunset that the flagship had got under weigh and gone off to Gros Islet Bay, where she was plainly visible at anchor. On my asking the Admiral the cause, he said, "Oh, she came to anchor badly to-day, and I sent her out there to practise all to-morrow. So the unfortunate crew, instead of getting a run on shore, spent the whole of the next day in getting under weigh and coming to anchor. The lesson was probably salutary, but severe.

The following night I dined with the Admiral, who, as in keeping with his sobriquet, "The Swell of the Ocean," had a cook whose equal I never had the good fortune to come across either on board ship or in the Colonies, with, perhaps, a single exception. On my telling the Admiral that his dinner was the best I had eaten in my six years of the West Indies he was evidently very much pleased. Years afterwards, when I had just returned to England after a long absence, and was dining alone at "The Travellers" (Club), I was startled by a voice exclaiming in my ear, "I hope your dinner is as good a one as you found mine at Castries." It was Lord Alcester.

In the latter part of 1869 I received a visit from Mr. Rawson, who was for some days a guest at Government House. He came in a ship-of-war, in which I accompanied him to Soufrière and Vieuxfort, situate respectively at the extreme north-west and north-east of the island. We together visited the Soufrière Mountain, and amused ourselves by boiling eggs in the volcanic water coming up through the barely hardened sulphur in innumerable places. The views during the ascent to the Soufrière and behind the Pitons are of unsurpassed beauty, the rich colour of both sea and land between and around these giant rocks almost equalling what I have since seen in the coral islands of the southern hemisphere.

At Vieuxfort we went ashore and rode to the plantation of Mr. John Goodman, forming a large cavalcade mounted

on ponies and mules. Mr. Goodman provided the large party with an excellent dinner; and I may say here that when specially commending Beauchamp Seymour's cook I must not be taken as depreciating West Indian dishes, some of which are of a nature to please the most critical palate. What is wanting in them is rather variety than quality. In St. Lucia, on the very few occasions when I dined out, the dinner, though excellent, was always nearly the same. The *pièce de résistance* was a saddle of lamb with both legs intact and the tail visible (experience indicating the necessity of insisting upon a tail with hind-quarter joints to make sure that it was not goat). Then there was always a large, truffled turkey, a huge, beautifully made *meringue*, and land-crabs dressed in their shells, besides luxuries imported from France—such as *ceps*, *pâté de foie gras*, etc.—the whole assisted by a great variety of French wine, which, owing to the continual intercourse preserved with France, was of specially good quality.

CHAPTER III

Visit to Trinidad—Hon. Arthur Gordon, Governor—Charles Kingsley: my impression of him—Reasoning of monkeys—Charles Kingsley visits me in St. Lucia—The "Cinquante Pas du Roi": difficulty at Canaries and its settlement—Subsequent gratitude of villagers—Visit of Judge Norton—Invasion of fleas—Captain Warburton, R.E.—Telegraph subsidy—Castries Corporation: neglect of its duty and its abolition—Bad condition of roads, and cause—The *corvée* system: its abuses—Instance of double action of brain—Substitution of poll-tax for *corvée* and its success.

EARLY in January, 1870, when overwork was imperatively demanding a short change, I accepted the hospitable invitation of Mr. Arthur Gordon (now Lord Stanmore)[1] to pay him a visit in Trinidad, of which island he was then Governor. I was the more eager to do so, because, being already an Administrator of experience, he had views and tastes with which I had much sympathy. Among these I may specially mention his love of nature, his predilection for forest travel, and his strong feeling on the subject of due protection for the immigrants from India and China.

The Government House at Trinidad, which I afterwards inhabited, was not then built, the Governor living in a large bungalow situate at the western end of the beautiful botanic garden. The dwelling, itself a picturesque object, was surrounded by much varied beauty of foliage and mountain. Nothing could exceed the kindness of my reception by Mr. and Mrs. Gordon; their ever-considerate attention to one who was not in good health contributing largely to make my visit specially agreeable. Needless to say that this result was also in some measure due to the presence in the house of Charles Kingsley and his daughter.

[1] Youngest son of the fourth Earl of Aberdeen, Prime Minister.

I had previously known the author of *Westward Ho!* only from his books, and, as I imagine is usual in such cases, I found the man to be very different from my idea of him. His stammering and other peculiarities did not seem to indicate the manly nature which I knew he possessed. His expressions of admiration evinced an almost feminine enthusiasm, and he gave the impression of extreme earnestness even about insignificant trifles by a peculiarity of voice which I have frequently observed in clergymen when they read out numbers of chapter and verse, as well as the text itself, with the same solemnity. Nevertheless, I felt for him by degrees a strong personal attraction, especially as he took extreme interest in, and never lost an opportunity of drawing from me, my experiences in the tropical forest, which were still fresh in my memory. It seems that I was mistaken in supposing this interest assumed out of kindliness to a sick man leading a very isolated life. On reading Kingsley's *Memoirs*, I found there, in a letter written to his wife and not intended for publication, a reference to me as "Mr. D. V., Governor of St. Lucia" (in terms too complimentary to be repeated here), from which it is clear that my narrations had given him real pleasure. It appears from this, also, that he had known my father and mother—a fact which I do not remember his mentioning to me at the time.

Mr. Gordon expressed deep interest in my letter to Lord Granville about the condition of the Guiana coolies, the fate of which was as yet unknown. He had discovered defects similar to those I had pointed out in the system of immigration in Trinidad, had already remedied some of them, and was about to deal with others. Needless to say that this confirmation of my views afforded me much comfort at what was naturally a period of great anxiety.

Sadly I left this pleasant house and party to return to my dreary life in St. Lucia, which was only rendered tolerable by the perception, already acquired, of how much field there was for continuous labour towards improvement.

Shortly after my return I was delighted to see again Charles Kingsley and his daughter, who paid me a visit of some hours at my house while the steamer which was carrying them to England remained in harbour. I then gave him some photographs, which I had had printed in England, of the Guiana forest, and among which was that of the great tree before mentioned as subsequently appearing in *At Last*. I gave him, also, a curious natural history specimen which, if I knew where it is now, I should be glad to see again. It was a rat-tail partially swallowed by a harmless snake which is his deadly enemy. The swallower was, I think, no larger than the swallowed, with a skin so distended as to be almost transparent. This swallowing feat was witnessed by a considerable number of people. The particulars of the preliminary battle I have now forgotten, except that the conqueror managed to encircle his victim and kill him by breaking his back, proceeding immediately afterwards to devour him, head first. When some inches of rat-tail had disappeared, both were taken and put into rum, in which condition they were presented to me. I was told at the time, though I never had an opportunity of establishing the fact, that what was observed on this occasion is not an uncommon occurrence, and that when the victim, as in this case, is too large to be devoured at one meal, a portion only is taken in and digested without being separated from the remainder, which is dealt with by instalments in the same way. If so, the gastric juice of this snake must be of marvellous power, and might prove to be a medicine more valuable than pepsine.[1]

Of Kingsley's conversation during his visit, I have retained clearly only one remark. On observing in my room his brother's novel, *Geoffrey Hamlin*, for which I expressed

[1] Before leaving the subject of snakes, I may mention that a dead rat-tail was once brought to the Government Office in Castries, from which emerged over eighty live young ones. As these were all about an inch in length, they could hardly have been then born; and this circumstance, therefore, seems to give confirmation to the common belief that in a moment of danger the young seek refuge in the body of their mother.

much admiration, he said, as I thought, with an air of superiority, "Yes, the best book Henry ever wrote."

Early in 1870 took place an occurrence which before a settlement was reached occasioned much trouble and anxiety. When the French governed the island, they granted the land to private persons, reserving for public purposes a strip all round the coast fifty paces from high-water mark, still called the "Cinquante Pas du Roi." Some of the proprietors of neighbouring estates, having been allowed to use this reserved land for generations, had come to look upon it as their own, and the power of resumption possessed by the Crown had been almost forgotten.

In the Bay of Canaries, situate on the western coast between Castries and Soufrière, the proprietors of the estate situate in the neighbouring valley had seventy years before permitted a negro village to spring up on the "Cinquante Pas." So long as the inhabitants of this village continued to be the obedient servants of the proprietor they were permitted to remain undisturbed. But disagreement having occurred on the pretext of alleged trespasses by the villagers, the proprietor was preparing to eject them, and actually applied to the magistrate to have their stock destroyed. On receiving Grey's report of the circumstances, and after making due inquiries, I saw that such unjust proceedings, if permitted, would cause a dangerous feeling throughout the island, especially as other arbitrary acts on the part of the proprietor had already embittered the villagers' feelings towards him. The proprietor had sufficient remedy at law against trespassers to obviate all necessity for extreme measures of this kind, even if they were legal, which I was advised these were not. In any case, to render homeless some hundreds of people for the faults of a few was unjustifiable.

After full consideration of this subject in Executive Council I determined, in spite of a somewhat hesitating compliance on the part of the other members, to resume the "Cinquante Pas" on behalf of the Crown and to sell it

in lots on easy terms to the people who possessed houses there. As such a proceeding was unprecedented, it excited much bitterness among a certain class of proprietors, especially those of French descent; but I was glad to find that some of the more enlightened acknowledged its justice and expediency as tending to obviate dangerous disturbances.

The expediency was proved by the result. For the baffled proprietor, finding it necessary to cultivate amicable relations with his black neighbours, entirely changed his attitude towards them, which they reciprocated by working his estate as in former times. The villagers also showed gratitude to the Government for their improved position, and, regarding Grey as the moving cause of it, they came up in a body to attend his funeral. Years afterwards, when I was temporarily leaving the island, they presented me with an address recognising in warm terms what had been done for them; and, moreover, at a subsequent time they made a voluntary offer of assistance to the Government for the purpose of quelling a disturbance in another part of the island.

Though the cure and prevention of abuses occupied my time largely in my first year, I was continually taking notes with a view to measures of improvement. Before the end of 1871 I had already passed a considerable number of ordinances making salutary reforms of various kinds. Several of these dealt with subjects requiring more or less elaborate provisions, and as I found it to be necessary to draft them myself as well as to advocate them in the Legislature and explain them to the Secretary of State, my work was so severe that I was frequently threatened with a breakdown of health. From this, however, I was saved, partly by visitors, to whom an attention was due, which interrupted the strain, and partly by brief vacations—one spent in Barbados and one in St. Vincent, where my friend Mr. Dundas was then Lieutenant-Governor. A second visit to Mr. Gordon in Trinidad, which was intended to have this

effect, proved unfortunate owing to the accident, previously mentioned in that part of my narrative relating to Guiana.

Of my visitors on the Morne, one was Judge Norton, of British Guiana, whose stay was rendered memorable by an invasion of fleas, such as happily I have never experienced before or since. They appeared suddenly one morning without notice, and in such numbers that it was impossible to keep them out of one's clothes, the irritation thus caused reminding me forcibly of the *bête rouge* of the Guiana forest. Fortunately in two or three days the plague disappeared as suddenly as it came, and what is still more singular, I never afterwards saw one of the creatures in my house.

Another of my visitors (of the human species) was Captain Warburton, of the Royal Engineers. He was a man of very marked ability, for whom there seemed a prospect of a brilliant career. I found that he was on terms of friendly correspondence with one of the distinguished brothers [1] of my stepmother, Sir William Denison, who belonged to the same corps. In the evenings while smoking in the gallery we discussed many subjects, including religion, on which we held similar views—views which I have found to be common to most men who, leading solitary lives, have been compelled to think for themselves. Without discussing these here, I cannot forbear mentioning with approval as evidence of really liberal views on the part of a sectarian, a sentiment which Warburton repeated to me orally, attributing it to William Penn. It was as follows: "The good, pious, and devout souls are everywhere of one

[1] With regard to one of these brothers, the well-known George Anthony, I may mention as interesting and not, I think, generally known, that Mr. Ditcher, the Vicar of South Brent, who was the plaintiff in the celebrated suit of Ditcher *v.* Denison and might be supposed to have been bitter at the defeat of his extreme Low Church views, sent for George Denison to console him when he was dying, though there were many other clergymen in the neighbourhood who would have been available—a fact equally to the credit of one and the other. For myself, I may say that there was no one known to me in my youth for whom I retain a warmer feeling than for the irrepressible G. A. D.

religion, and when death takes off the mask they shall know one another, though the divers liveries they wear in this life make them strangers."

Early in 1870, by dint of arguments carried on through four hours of an intensely hot afternoon, I succeeded at last in persuading the Legislative Council to sanction a subsidy of £500 a year for the West India and Panama Telegraph Company. The ship laying the cable was then off the port, and had the subsidy been refused, she would have passed the island, and communication by telegraph with the outside world could have been obtained afterwards only at greatly increased cost.

Yet at the time I dreaded the telegraph as likely to curtail my freedom of action; but my fear proved groundless, while the daily arrival of news, however scanty, tended to lessen the isolation. And the cable proved to be in many ways useful both to the Government and people.

In 1870 the Corporation of Castries passed a bye-law which would have so seriously interfered with the trade of the port that I felt compelled to disallow it. The work of this petty municipal body had been in various respects unsatisfactory, and the town under its rule had fallen into a very neglected condition. Finding that a desire for its abolition was very general, I determined to take advantage of it, and among the many measures of improvement which were passed within the first two years of my administration was one putting an end to the Elective Council and establishing in its place a nominated Board responsible to the Government. This change took place with a public approval which was almost universal, being opposed only by a few members of the deposed Council and others who aspired to be such, while a public petition against it received only one signature. In a very short time its value was shown by the greatly improved condition of the town, its wharves and its finances.

The roads of the island generally were in an equally parlous condition with the streets and wharves of Castries,

and my attention was equally directed to their improvement. The sea being the principal highway, the roads were for the most part only bridle-paths; but it was none the less necessary that they should be in a condition to be used with safety, and that the bridges over the numerous streams should be in repair.

But the care of the roads had been entrusted to Commissioners, most of them planters, supplied with labour by the "*corvée*," a survival from the period of French occupation by which every able-bodied man was obliged to give six days' labour on the road or to pay a commutation of six shillings per annum. Under strict supervision this system might have worked well enough, and perhaps did in the time of the French; but now the days of *corvée* labour were an occasion rather of jollification than of real work. Such work as was done was too often directed, in the absence of any Government superintendence, to the private roads of planters rather than to those belonging to the public. The laxity of the system was early shown by the fact that when Mr. Grey within his district endeavoured to get from the *corvée* some approach to real work, the number of commutations in money nearly doubled.

I lost no opportunity both in Council and elsewhere of exposing the abuses of this system. And so in 1871, I was able to pass through the Council a measure abolishing the *corvée* and substituting for it a poll-tax on all adult male inhabitants of six shillings a head, provision being at the same time made for the appointment of a Colonial Engineer, responsible for the condition of the roads all over the island, as well as for the construction and maintenance of public buildings.

Previous measures imposing poll-tax in the West Indies had not been fortunate, and, I believe, in every instance had had to be withdrawn after much rioting and disturbance as well as evasion. Consequently all kinds of evil were predicted of this measure, and I cannot say that I was altogether without apprehension as to the

result of the experiment. All fear on this head, however, proved to be groundless. The people had evidently come to feel that the government was directed to their benefit. The tax was very generally and cheerfully paid in the first year, and the collection, being by degrees made more stringent, became almost exhaustive before I left the island, thus adding a not inconsiderable sum to the public revenue and enabling an improvement of the roads which could only be appreciated by one who had seen their previous condition.

CHAPTER IV

Legislation in 1869, 1870, 1871—Abolition of Tribunal of Appeal and substitution of an improved court—Measure for reducing costs on judicial sales, with remarkable effect—Constitution of office of Colonial Trustee—Provision of telegraph subsidy—Inducement of immigrants to remain—Establishment of Government Savings Bank—Provision for sick poor and establishment of hospitals—Constitution of office of Colonial Engineer and Surveyor—Law for removal of dangerous persons—The better maintenance of roads—Charitable institutions and measures for improvement—Rapid increase of revenue—New tariff passed unanimously after much opposition—Official approval of proceedings—Visit of Lord and Lady Frederick Cavendish—"De Lord is come"—Natural history observations.

IN order to convey to the reader with no knowledge of the work of a colonial Administrator, some idea of its scope, merely on the official side, I will herewith present him with some specimen measures to which I gave my time and attention during the first two years of office. It will be seen that there was no lack of variety; and I may add that all of these measures were subsequently confirmed by H. M. Secretary of State for the Colonies.

1. A law constituting the Chief Justice President of the Tribunal of Appeal from magistrates' decisions. The court previously existing had been one of the weak expedients adopted for the purpose of lessening the ill-effects of the late judge's doings.

This law prohibited the introduction of new evidence in appeal, the permission of which had encouraged subornation of perjury. When the measure came into force there was a significant diminution in the number of appeals.

2. A new Masters and Servants Law to replace the

Order-in-Council which had been made with reference to newly emancipated slaves, and had become in many respects seriously out of date. Other laws were:

3. For reducing the costs on the sale of real property, these costs being one of the many scandals of the recent régime in the Supreme Court. An estate sold judicially immediately after the new regulations came into force realised £6,500, and of this sum the creditors obtained £500 more, and the public treasury £90 more than they would have received previously.

The average proportion of these costs to the proceeds of sales, which previous to this law had been 28 per cent., was in the succeeding years reduced to 3 per cent., and in 1875 to 1·7 per cent.

4. For constituting a new officer, the colonial Trustee, whose principal duty was to take charge of vacant successions and estate of bankrupts and unrepresented absentees. The administration of these estates had furnished another of the many legal scandals. There had been no systematic compulsion to render accounts. Sometimes these were never seen at all, and even when brought to light were most unsatisfactory.

5. To provide a subsidy for the West India and Panama Telegraph Company, in return for specified services to be rendered.

6. To provide inducement for immigrants from India to remain in the island after the termination of their indentures service. By this a not inconsiderable amount of labour was retained which would otherwise have been lost to the colony.

7. Establishing a Government Savings Bank. This bank, I am glad to hear, has existed and flourished ever since, the deposits showing an annual increase.

8. Providing for the better care of the sick poor, for the establishment of a general and district hospitals, and for the maintenance of an improved medical service. This subject will be dealt with further below.

9 and 10. Constituting the offices of Colonial Engineer and Colonial Surveyor.

11. Giving power to the Governor to remove from the island persons dangerous to its peace and good order. This was one of the few laws passed which it was deemed necessary to refer for the sanction of the Secretary of State before putting it into force. As it turned out, he objected —and rightly objected—to my draft, and I was instructed to substitute for deportation a banishment order, with penalty for disobedience. This was a decided improvement, as by the simple order of banishment the Government avoided responsibility for the destination chosen by the person banished.

A measure of this kind had been rendered necessary by the arrival of highly objectionable persons from two different quarters. French convicts had come from Cayenne, either having escaped or having been sent to this destination by the Government. On the other hand, there had been serious troubles and insurrection in Martinique, and various coloured agitators, in fear of punishment, had crossed to St. Lucia, where there was good reason to believe they continued to plot against the French Government. Though this was the subject of several complaints from the Governor of Martinique, I could not deal with these men unless some offence were proved against them which rendered them amenable to extradition. Moreover, their offence being of a merely political character, it would under ordinary circumstances be contrary to British policy to interfere with them. The circumstances of this case, however, were exceptional. The peoples of Martinique and St. Lucia are so closely connected by common blood and language, as well as by frequent intermarriage and intercommunication, that any disturbance arising in the one island is almost certain to have dangerous effects in the other. The race-hatred, which had become so violent in Martinique, was not without a certain counterpart in St. Lucia, and there was clear evidence of efforts to increase this

ill-feeling. The Government printer had been induced to issue an inflammatory pamphlet which would almost certainly have had serious consequences if the majority of the people had not come to look upon the Government as their friend. On this account, fortunately, the dangerous seed fell mostly on ground unfavourable to it, while a wholesome fear of the new law rendered it almost unnecessary to enforce it. Indeed, I do not remember that it was enforced at all, except against one or two escaped convicts.

The pamphlet referred to was an able one, and, if I remember rightly, abounded in insidiously veiled suggestion. I have unfortunately preserved only one passage of it, which I noted as strikingly true, and, but for its connection, harmless. It was as follows :—

"The offensive manner of many coloured people and the unhappy prevalence among them of dishonest and disreputable living, which are often put forward as the cause of their exclusion from society, is in reality quite as much its effect. But this objectionable familiarity is in reality a phase of wounded vanity, demanding a constant assertion of equality, while despair of social advancement involves the absence of what is to most men one of the strongest inducements to rectitude."

12. Providing for the better maintenance of the roads and bridges of the island, and for bringing them more completely under Government control.

I had passed altogether over thirty ordinances, all but one or two formal ones having been not only conceived, but actually drafted by myself; and I may mention that, there being no shorthand writer in the island to report what was said, I felt it expedient for the information, not only of the Secretary of State but of the local public, that very full minutes should be published of all debates in Council. As I had at command no one capable of doing this to my satisfaction, I was always occupied immediately after each of the many meetings at which these ordinances were passed, and while my memory was fresh, in recording for publication as complete a summary as possible of all dis-

cussion upon them and other business. I was specially careful to enter all arguments in opposition, and after the minutes had been published in the Government *Gazette* members were always at the next meeting afforded an opportunity of objecting to any errors of commission or omission. That these reports were faithfully given may be gathered from the fact that in the whole of my career in St. Lucia only on one occasion was such objection offered, and then all the other members, except the objector, asserted their understanding of what he had said as being what I had recorded. In the case of important meetings these minutes occupied several columns of small print, so that it may be imagined the labour in preparing them was by no means slight, every sentence having to be carefully considered, to avoid the possibility of giving false impressions of what was said.

Among the earliest subjects which engaged my attention was the condition and inadequacy of the public charitable institutions and the almost utter inability on the part of the great majority of people to obtain medical aid in case of illness or accident. These institutions then consisted of a lunatic asylum, a Yaws asylum, and a poor asylum. There was no hospital, such patients as were treated at the public expense being, whatever their diseases, lodged in the poor asylum, together with aged poor and occasionally even with lunatics—for whom there was no room in their proper asylum. The Yaws asylum, much overcrowded with patients suffering from that leprous disease, was a wretched and wholly unsuitable building, close to the lunatic asylum and under the same management. The building for the latter was even more unsuitable in itself, while it was entirely without any enclosure, so that the wretched inmates were necessarily confined to the house and its small verandah. The insecurity of the premises had, perhaps, suggested and kept in use various forms of restraint which had been long abandoned in more civilised communities.

As regards want of medical aid, I found that many, in

all parts of the island, died from trifling diseases and accidents, who, with the aid of the most ordinary professional skill, might have been saved. I found also on the examination of the mortality returns that the high death-rate was principally caused by a very disproportionate loss of children. In fact, the chance of living to the age of five in St. Lucia was no greater than that of reaching fifteen in England. Apart from the question of humanity, simple economic expediency rendered imperative attempts to reduce this excessive mortality in an island where prosperity so much depended upon the amount of available labour. By continually urging this consideration I succeeded in gradually overcoming the opposition of some of the unofficial members of Council to the expenditure required for the most obviously necessary improvements.[1]

Though, as the natural result of the various reforms above indicated, the revenue began at once to increase rapidly, it was impossible to meet from it all these new charges without some additional taxation.

After full consideration of all possible alternatives, I decided upon a small increase of the import duties, especially those upon spirits and tobacco, such a measure having more than ordinary justification in the fact that the objects for which additional revenue was required were chiefly for the benefit of the poorer classes. Placing my proposal before the Secretary of State, together with an exhaustive review of all other possible forms of taxation and my

[1] Before I left the island in 1876 the most crying evils had been remedied in the following particulars:—

1. A large house with extensive recreation ground attached had been purchased and adapted for the use of lunatics.

2. The old lunatic asylum, repaired and improved, was utilised as an additional Yaws asylum.

3. One large central hospital, capable of accommodating 200 patients, had been built at Castries, and two auxiliary hospitals had been provided—one at Soufrière and one at Vieuxfort.

4. This permitted of the poor asylum being used exclusively for paupers.

5. Provision had been made for the salaries of a Colonial Surgeon and three assistant surgeons.

reasons for rejecting them, I, with Mr. Rawson's support, received his sanction for that which I had chosen.

To obtain the approval of the Legislative Council without the use of the official votes was a matter of greater difficulty. There was strong opposition on the part of all the unofficial members; but after prolonged argument the planters were converted, and the merchants eventually followed suit, so that the new tariff passed unanimously.

In reporting the successful outcome of this Council meeting I remarked that unanimity with regard to such a measure was unprecedented in the history of the island; and Mr. Rawson, in addressing the Secretary of State on the subject, while confirming the above statement, said—

"I concur with the Administrator in considering that the success of his budget and the disposition of his Council are subjects of congratulation; I have satisfaction in adding that I attribute both to his zealous and able administration of the affairs of the island."

I may mention here that my first and only serious difference with Mr. Rawson happened during 1871. It was a time when the home Government was bent upon the abolition, as far as possible, of all religious endowments. He and I felt that such abolition would in St. Lucia be inexpedient, and that what was required was some degree of "levelling up" between the endowments allotted respectively to Roman Catholics and Protestants. The former were greatly in the majority, and the total amount given in salaries to their ten curés was very disproportionate to that of the stipends of the two Protestant ministers. Being, perhaps, more alive to greater needs of the colony, I was desirous that there should be no increase in the total amount of religious endowment, and that the inequality should be remedied by distributing that amount strictly according to the numbers of the two sects. Mr. Rawson, on the other hand, in order to retain the existing salaries of the Protestant ministers, which were, indeed, little enough, advocated additions to the Roman Catholic vote,

which I felt would mean undue increase of expenditure; and he, perhaps not unnaturally, resented the somewhat vigorous presentation of his subordinate's opinions.

The decision of the Secretary of State, to whom this matter was referred, though more in accord with my view than Mr. Rawson's, was a compromise between the two extremes. I must acknowledge that I was wrong in advocating endowments in exact proportion to numbers. For the Catholic clergy had means of increasing their emoluments by fees, of which they fully availed themselves, while the English ministers being almost entirely without such assistance, the cutting down of their stipends on the occurrence of vacancies would probably result in depriving the Protestants of all ministry. I was fortunately ignorant of what irritation at my opposition caused Mr. Rawson to write of me on this occasion, until it was published long afterwards in a Parliamentary Blue Book, and so the estrangement between us which was caused by the difference was short-lived. I frankly acknowledged where I had been in error, and our relations continued to be as agreeable as at first up to the conclusion of his term of office.

Apart from the question of clerical stipends, the religious difficulty, as in larger communities, showed itself in matters of education. An Education Board, of which the Administrator was chairman, decided in what proportion the educational vote was to be distributed between the two sects. In the face of an increasing opposition on the part of the Catholic clergy, I always supported the equal division of the vote, on the ground that the Mico Charity, though conducted by Protestants, gave education without regard to the religion of the pupils, and that their schools were utilised by many Catholic parents who desired a superior education for their children. I was sorry to hear that after my departure from the island this excellent charity found it necessary to abandon its work in St. Lucia, the pressure of the Catholic clergy having caused the withdrawal from their schools of most of their non-Protestant pupils.

In December, 1871, I received a visit from Lord and Lady Frederick Cavendish, who, remaining with me some days, afforded me an agreeable change from the monotony of my ordinary existence. Sir Graham Briggs, a leading planter in Barbados, who also owned property in St. Kitts, was my guest at the same time, and on his invitation our whole party accompanied him to Barbados on a visit to his estate. I was then in far from good health, and my memory of this period is very indistinct. I, however, recall one circumstance which caused me much surprise. I pointed out on my table some specially small dwarf bananas, which I thought were probably new to my English guests, when Lady Frederick informed me that the plants from which this banana had been first cultivated in the West Indies had been sent from Chatsworth, and that it was called *Musa Cavendishiana;* which reminds me that during a visit to Chatsworth in the winter of 1873 I was admiring the ordered beauty of the great conservatory there, when Lady Frederick remarked, with much truth, "After all, it is not as beautiful as one of your negro gardens."

Our drive across the island of Barbados to Sir Graham's plantation was one prolonged ovation. The local yeomanry escorted the carriage, and crowds of people in all of the many villages cheered, or rather screamed and yelled vociferously, some of them occasionally shouting, "De Lord is come!" I am not without a suspicion that the more ignorant had an idea of some special relation between the English nobility and the Maker of the universe!

While in Barbados Mr. Rawson (who also extended to us his hospitality), seeing my condition of health, persuaded me to avail myself without further delay of the leave of absence which had been more than once accorded to me, but of which I had not taken advantage. Accordingly, the Cavendishes having returned with me to St. Lucia, I quickly finished all immediately pressing business, and left with them in the mail steamer for England. That my health

had come very near a breakdown was not altogether to be wondered at. I had been unwell from the moment of arrival, two and a half years before, and in the interval had occurred my accident in Trinidad, the Guiana Commission, and my labours in St. Lucia of which I have given a very inadequate description.

On my departure several addresses were presented to me. These were signed by the leading representatives of all classes, white and coloured, and showed clearly that my work for the island had at length become generally appreciated. Their effect was therefore an encouragement such as I had never before experienced.

I have omitted to mention that in October, 1871, cholera and small-pox being rife in the neighbouring islands, it became specially necessary to give attention to the sanitary condition of the towns and villages. With a view to improvement in this respect, I devised and drafted some general regulations, which a local law enabled the Governor to put into force on their proclamation. The effect produced was beyond my expectation, the people recognising the object and value of the provisions far more generally than has been the case in some communities usually supposed to be more enlightened.

It may be presumed that the Secretary of State approved of these regulations. For though I was never directly informed of the fact, I received some months afterwards a circular despatch, addressed to Governors of Tropical Colonies, containing a copy of my regulations and recommending them as worthy of general adoption.

My time in St. Lucia was always so fully occupied that I had little to spare for other than official work. Natural history observations were necessarily confined almost exclusively to such as could be made in the immediate neighbourhood of my house. In the grass on the Morne there was abundance of the common sarsaparilla,[1] the only plant

[1] Having seen the plant recently in a conservatory, I was told that its scientific name is *Asclepias curassavica*, or swallow-wort.

growing wild, which I have seen in many parts of the world widely separated. For I have noticed its little red flowers with their yellow centres not only in St. Lucia, on the sea wall in Georgetown, Demerara, and in Trinidad, but in Australia and in several islands of the Western Pacific. Sensitive plants were also in great profusion, and where many grew close together it was curious to notice the effect on all of a slight touch upon one, which by its immediately shrivelled appearance seemed to affect with sympathy all its neighbours.

The hollow cones constituting the traps of the ant-lion were so abundant that they could hardly fail to attract notice. When an unwary ant reached the loose sand at the edge of the trap, the falling of grains aroused his enemy lying concealed at the bottom. Immediately the powerful hind-legs of the ant-lion would throw up a shower of sand, which, falling on the ant, caused it to tumble down the side of the cone and to be quickly seized and devoured. In so far as I know (but I confess that my knowledge is extremely limited) this is the only animal in the whole range of natural history which uses for obtaining its prey a weapon which is not part of its own body. For the stories about monkeys throwing sticks are, I am inclined to think, apocryphal, and have probably arisen from the fact, which I myself observed in the Guiana forest, that monkeys, when alarmed, in running quickly along the tops of the trees cause the breaking of dry twigs in their passage over them.

The ruby-breasted humming-bird was a frequent visitor to the flowers which grew about the galleries of my house. They were particularly fond of a perennial purple convolvulus, the flowers of which opened in the early morning and did not last beyond the day. Climbing with it was a white convolvulus, an annual which flowered only at night (*Ipomœa bona nox*); and I noticed as curious that the humming-birds appeared to find its attraction so great as to abandon for it their usual habit of going to roost at sunset.

Long after the short tropical gloaming had completely ceded to night I used to see in the moonlight what I thought to be these birds, hovering over the opening *Ipomœa*, probing the flower with what seemed long beaks, and making identically the same humming noise with their rapidly moving wings which had become a familiar sound by day. In order to solve the doubts on the subject, continually occurring, and to discover whether it was not some unknown night species of humming-bird, I managed to catch one of the creatures in a fly-net, when to my astonishment I found it was not a bird at all, but a moth which in shape as well as habits bore a singularly close resemblance to that for which I had mistaken it. It was one of the species Sphinx, varieties of which exist in Europe. For when expressing doubts on this point years afterwards (1892) to Lady Wharncliffe at Vichy, she, in order to convince me, caught one in a neighbouring garden, which though rather smaller, was otherwise almost identical with my St. Lucia specimen.

On the subject of this moth I may mention a curious predilection shown by another variety of Sphinx in the Far East. When we were living in the summer on the Peak at Hong Kong, one of these moths came into the room at dinner-time, and hovering over a wine-glass containing whisky, imbibed some of the contents. These it found so attractive that though again and again driven away, it persisted in returning, and at length, being allowed to remain, drank itself into a motionless state of intoxication.

CHAPTER V

Arrival in England—Death of two sisters—Sir George Grey—Brooks's: my first entrance and first meeting with Lord Rosebery—Brooks's betting-book—Extraordinary coincidence—Reverend George Wilkinson, afterwards Bishop: some work for him and its results—Thanksgiving Service at St. Paul's and my experiences there—Visit to Malvern—Go to Scotland—Seaton House—Invermark Castle—St. Andrews and golf—Malham Tarn—Eshton Hall—Brighton—Cannes—Burley-on-the-Hill—Leave England.

OF the voyage to England I can remember very little except that such time as I was able to spend outside my cabin was rendered more than usually agreeable by the Frederick Cavendishes, Lady Frederick's high spirits, quick repartee, and lively talk doing much to moderate the ordinary solemnity of the captain's table. While going ashore on the tug at Plymouth, in complete darkness, the hand-baggage, both of the Cavendishes and myself, was opened. Apparently, however, the thief was much hurried, for leaving articles of some value, he took only things of no consequence. Before leaving for London we dined with Mr. St. Aubyn, at Stonehouse. What struck me most at his table were the fresh roses in the cheeks of two young English girls—a pleasing contrast to the pallor which quickly seizes upon all Europeans in the tropics.

My home-coming proved to be a sad one. As soon as I arrived in London I heard that my eldest half-sister, Lady Windham, had just died, never having recovered from the shock caused to her by the death in Florida of her husband, Sir Charles Windham,[1] and the pain involved in bringing his body through the United States to Canada, where he had been in command of the troops. Another sister was

[1] Formerly known as "the Hero of the Redan."

also in a precarious condition, and my first weeks were spent at Folkestone, where she shortly afterwards also died.

In London I occupied at first the house of my old aunt, Lady Grey, who herself was, as usual, at Cannes for the winter. The house in question (7, Seamore Place, Curzon Street) revived many memories of Saturday and Sunday outings from Charterhouse and of the statesmen whom I had formerly seen as guests there. One of these who was still alive, Sir George Grey, I during this year saw there again, and we had a long talk, chiefly about my doings and prospects. Though considerably past seventy, he appeared then in excellent health. I can remember little of what he said, except that he referred to his son (who died not long afterwards) as having come to see me in Canada when he was in attendance on the Prince of Wales some ten years previously. He, however, gave me the impression that he was a man of specially good judgment, so that I can well believe what is said of him, that his opinions carried more weight in the several Cabinets of which he formed part than those of others who hold a more prominent position in the history of their times.

Immediately after my arrival in London I went to Brooks's (Club), to which I had been elected in my absence some years before. On my going into the Club there occurred an amusing incident. None of the very few members known to me being there at the time, I asked to see the proprietor (it was then a proprietary club, though it has since been bought by the members). His name was Banderet, which in his letter to me announcing my election I had misread as Bauderet. The servant apparently did not hear me clearly, and there presently came into the strangers' room one whom I at once recognised as having been summoned under a mistake. He was one of the members, the first syllable of whose name sounded, though it is not spelt, like "Bo." Though I had not for a moment taken him for the proprietor, it may be imagined by those who are acquainted with the sobriquet by which he was

commonly known that he was by no means pleased at the mistake.

A few days after my arrival I was sitting alone at a late hour in the little octagon room on the second floor, which was then the only place in the club where smoking was permitted. (Up to a very recent period, however, there was always at the door of the morning-room a box of snuff for the use of members.) Presently there came into the room a young, entirely beardless man, looking almost as if he were still at school. I had never seen him before, nor he me, nor did I know who he was. In the course of conversation, when he referred to some recent event I mentioned that I knew nothing about it, as I had only just come from the West Indies. He at once showed much interest, and his questions about the various colonies evinced a knowledge of them which, in so young a man, who had never been there, I thought wonderful. My astonishment was still greater when I found that he had read, and evidently digested, all the recently published reports on Her Majesty's colonial possessions, and that he knew more than I did about those with which I had not been immediately connected. Presently he astonished me by asking whether I knew anything of a Mr. Des Vœux, whose report had particularly struck him as conveying much more suggestive information than such reports usually do; when he in turn showed a very genuine astonishment on hearing that I was the individual in question. As he then had the advantage of me, I thereupon asked him his name, when he replied, "Rosebery." Many years afterwards, in December, 1883, when Lord Rosebery was being entertained at a public dinner at Sydney by the Speaker of the New South Wales House of Assembly, I, in the course of an after-dinner speech, told this story of him by way of reply to statements which had been made that his colonial enthusiasm had been recently assumed.

Brooks's, which in the days of Fox and Sheridan had been celebrated for its gambling and conviviality, and, in a

later day, had been the scene of much political excitement (as when Lord Derby, afterwards the Tory leader, harangued the Whig magnates from the morning-room table), had now attained to a decorum nearly approaching to dullness.[1] Even a whist table was rarely seen; the billiard-room was scarcely ever used; and the only relics of former gambling were the hazard table, which had been formerly surrounded by Fox and his kindred spirits, the specimens of gambling counters (one representing £500), and the old betting-book.[2]

Political excitement had also nearly vanished, except perhaps, at the time of a General Election, when the polls were being posted (and now, since the division of the Liberal party, has almost entirely disappeared).

The Brooks's betting-book, in which all bets made in the Club were formerly recorded, bears striking testimony to the wide difference which separates the manners and habits prevailing at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth from those of the present day. Bets were entered there between persons of great position, to be read by all members of the Club, which, if made now, a man would hardly dare to avow to his greatest friend; while many others of a less objectionable character seem to indicate what we should now regard as a curious want of delicacy and sense of propriety. (I have recently noticed that some of the more outrageous of these records have disappeared.) Bets, if ever made now in the Club, are not entered in the book, the last entry being many years old. Only once have I heard a bet made at all, and that was as long ago as 1872 or 1873. It was in the same little smok-

[1] The late Frank Lockwood, I am told, once said that the solemnity and stateliness of dinner at Brooks's always suggested to him the poor Duke lying dead upstairs!

[2] I observe that in a recent novel the writer describes the younger members of Brooks's as endeavouring to revive the old days of gambling. Nothing could be more untrue. In the many years which have elapsed since I joined the club I have never seen, nor do I believe that there has been, any gambling at all.

ing-room mentioned above, and was between the late Duke of St. Albans and (I think) the late Mr. George Fitzwilliam, or his brother Charles, as to whether the late Lord —— had or had not dined a hundred and thirty times in the Club during the previous year. The proprietor, Mr. Banderet, was called in with the entry-book of diners, and it was found that the backer of the high number had won. Another occurrence witnessed by me in the same room which I recall as taking place at this time was when Lord Fife, at a late hour, brought in his son, the present Duke, and—a somewhat unusual occurrence—introduced him to all the members present.

In February, 1872, I was most hospitably entertained for some weeks by friends in Grosvenor Place. During this visit there occurred to me the most extraordinary coincidence that I ever experienced or even heard of. There had been a dinner-party, which I specially remember, because I sat next to a lady of remarkable attraction, the young wife of the Prince de Broglie, son of the then French Ambassador. Smoking in London houses was then not so common as now, my hostess particularly objecting to it; and so, after dinner, my host and I took our cigars outside. We were walking slowly round Eaton Square, and I was asking about the subsequent careers of our Oxford contemporaries. After hearing about others, I inquired, "What has become of 'Honeydew'?" that having been the Balliol sobriquet of Edwin Lascelles. My voice reached farther than was intended, and another replied, "Here I am." Thereupon emerged from the fog the very man whom I had named, and whom I had not seen for fifteen years! His mother, Lady Caroline, lived in the square, so that his presence there was in no way remarkable, but I was entirely ignorant of this. I met him, subsequently, several times before his untimely death, at Brooks's and elsewhere, and have often endeavoured to account for what, if mere coincidence, must have had against its occurrence many millions of chances to one. The only possible explanation

that has occurred to me is that we may have previously passed him in the square, and, though he was not recognised either by myself or my host (who knew him well), his features, in the foggy night, may have made some impression on my brain and revived the recollection of him. What is certain, however, is that neither of us who were walking together were conscious of having seen anyone at all.

Close to us in Grosvenor Place were the church and residence of the Rev. George Wilkinson, then Rector of St. Peter's, Eaton Square, and since successively Bishop of Truro and St. Andrews. As he was married to my first cousin, and they and their family were very intimate with my host and hostess, I saw much of him. Though my religious views and his were as the poles asunder, I could not help admiring greatly the earnestness and thoroughness of his work in the parish. I came to have so great a regard for him that I was very unwilling to refuse doing anything which he thought helpful. So when he asked me, with this object, to attempt the conversion to more rational views of certain socialists who rejected religion chiefly because it seemed especially belonging to the rich, I reluctantly consented, on the understanding that I should refrain altogether from touching doctrinal points.

Accordingly, on one or two Sunday afternoons, I called at a house, I think in Pimlico, where several of such men were in the habit of assembling. Whether my conversations and arguments with them (which appeared to be attractive, as derived from an experience of conditions utterly unlike those of England) had any permanent result, I never knew, but that they had some temporary effect was clear, as the news of them went abroad in the poorer parts of the parish. My doings thus became known to one of the district visitors, and I mention this circumstance because, through a singular concatenation of circumstances, it proved to be beyond measure fortunate. Through the district visitor in question I became acquainted with the late Lord and Lady Claud

Hamilton, and at their hospitable invitation paid several visits during the year to Heathfield, the place then occupied by them in Sussex. Meeting there Lady Claud's brother-in-law, William Baillie, I when later in the year staying with his mother, Lady Georgiana, at Brighton, met General (now Sir Richard) and Lady Jane Taylor. And it was at dinner at the Taylors' house in Eaton Place that in January, 1873, I met the father and mother of my future wife, to whom, as I left England almost immediately afterwards, it was highly improbable I should have otherwise become known. It is thus to those little meetings in Pimlico that I am able distinctly to trace by far the greatest happiness of my life.

While staying in Grosvenor Place there occurred the Thanksgiving Service at St. Paul's for the recovery of the Prince of Wales from his dangerous illness. I was present at the ceremony with a young cousin, and was much struck, as we drove through the streets to the Cathedral, with the extraordinary contrast between their then and their ordinary appearance. The people on the footpaths were so densely packed as to render movement impossible, while the centre of the roadway, usually crowded with traffic, was so clear of vehicles that we passed along rapidly and without any stoppage the whole way. Our seats in the Cathedral were not very good ones, and we saw the pageant and heard the service but imperfectly. I had not been in the Cathedral since, when a boy on a bitterly cold November day in 1852, I had had almost the best possible view of the funeral of the Duke of Wellington from one of Lord Harding's[1] seats near the north-west angle formed by the crossing of the nave and transept. On both occasions I was similarly struck with the singular effect produced by leaves[2] of the printed service turned over at the same moment by the congregation. I missed, however, at the later ceremony the

[1] Then Commander-in Chief.

[2] Since writing the above I have read Sir Edward Malet's reminiscences, and I observe that this effect was noticed by him also.

beautiful effect of the silver trumpets, which in the funeral service accompanied the organ. The Thanksgiving Service was, however, rendered to me specially memorable by circumstances which occurred immediately after it was over.

As we were coming out of the Cathedral, Mr. Onslow, Chaplain to the Prince of Wales, who had been one of the party occupying the same seats with ourselves, was seized with a fit. With the aid of another, I managed to lift him, and forced our way through the crowd to place him on one of the stone seats in the side of the wall. The poor man was purple in the face, and seemed almost *in extremis*, the attack being, as I supposed, apoplexy. It is almost incredible how some persons under such circumstances lose their heads, and the offers made for alleviating the patient's condition were extraordinary, one man actually tendering a package of sandwiches! With difficulty, however, we obtained a knife from one of the bystanders, and cut open shirt and dress in order to afford relief to the breathing. I then took hold of the sufferer's body, someone assisting with the legs, and carried out through the crowd into the open air what appeared to be the heaviest weight I ever lifted in my life. Leaving the poor man in good hands, I hurried back into the church to find my cousin, and found her bending over the prostrate body of a young lady, who, being well acquainted with Mr. Onslow, had fainted at the sight of his condition. I had then the comparatively easy task of assisting to carry her out also, she, however, quickly recovering on reaching the open air.

When some days afterwards Mr. Onslow also was better, he wrote me a very grateful letter; but he died, I believe, shortly afterwards, and I never saw him again.

In May, my hosts having gone abroad, I moved into lodgings in St. James's Place, and began to take part in the "gaieties" of the season. Being fond of dancing, I went to many balls, one of which was probably the last held at the old Northumberland House, since removed to make way for the avenue of the same name.

After a dinner at Lady Cawdor's in South Audley Street on the Derby Day, I walked down with Mr. Pole-Carew (since become the distinguished General of that name) to the Marlborough Club, and played with him a game of American bowls in the alley which then existed there, but has since been removed. It was the first and last time I ever saw the game in England, though I had often played it in America, and it has always been a matter of surprise that an amusement which requires skill and combines excitement with exercise has never become naturalised here.

Though British air had much improved my health, London dissipation, which only excitement enabled me to sustain, at length began to tell upon me severely, and I went with William Baillie to Malvern for good air and rest. Early in August I went to Scotland to pay a visit at Seaton House, near Arbroath, to Mr. Strachan Carnegie, husband to the sister of my friend Grey, whose death two years before had caused me so much sorrow. A charming hostess and an agreeable party in the house contributed to make a very pleasant week.

About the 18th August I availed myself of an invitation to shoot grouse, which had been given me in the summer at my Aunt Grey's by Lord Dalhousie, known to me in boyhood as Mr. Fox Maule. After a circuitous railway journey and a sixteen-mile drive from Brechin, I arrived at Invermark, Lord Dalhousie's shooting-lodge, where Lady Susan Ramsay was assisting her brother to entertain a large party. Included in this were, together with their eldest brother, Ladies Constance (now Lady Elgin) and Beatrice Carnegie, who had not been the least agreeable of the guests at Seaton House. Besides Lord Carnegie and his uncle John (Captain R.N.), the shooting-men were Major Young and Major Ramsay (nephews of our host) and Mr. Claud Carnegie, the son of my host at Seaton. The non-shooters were all ladies, with the exception of Lord Halifax (the former Sir Charles Wood), who with two members of his family arrived some days after myself.

The lodge, which I think Lord Dalhousie had built himself, was a very large and comfortable one, while the shooting was then probably, if it is not now, the best in Scotland. Lord Dalhousie liked to be credited with large bags, and his nephew Major Young had that year, and I believe in two previous years, by sleeping on the moor, and thus getting to work very early, secured on the 12th August, two hundred brace of grouse to his own gun. Each "gun" was, as a rule, sent out separately, being provided with a pony to carry him to and from his beat and another to carry the game, and he was also accompanied by a keeper, with two gillies and two brace of dogs.

At the time of my arrival the bloom of the shooting, so to speak, had been taken off; but nevertheless, on the first few days of my visit forty to sixty brace fell to every gun except mine. My bag had never exceeded twenty-five to thirty brace, partly because I was perhaps the worst shot of the six, and partly because illness and the West Indian climate had rendered me less able than they to hold out for a long day's moor walking. In fact, I usually returned to the house an hour or two before the others. My indifferent performance was consequently a subject of much "chaff," and I determined that for once I would try to beat all of the others. Accordingly, having heard one evening that next day I was to have a particularly good beat, I arranged to start very early, and got out on the moor by eight o'clock, or probably nearly two hours before the others. Walking hard whenever the dogs pointed, and allowing only twenty minutes for luncheon, I shot on until dark, and arrived at the lodge only just in time for eight o'clock dinner. I could hardly speak from exhaustion, but I had bagged sixty-three brace, or three and a half more than the best of the others, the crack-shot Major Young, who in turn came in for much chaff on the subject.

Our host said that mine had been a "record" performance for so late in the season (26th August), and expressed the intention of having it painted up on the wall with my

name attached to it; but whether this was ever done I never learnt. Lest it should be thought that my shooting was particularly good, I may say at once that it was not. The birds were so numerous that Major Young in the same place and in equal time would have killed close upon one hundred brace. How abundant they were on these moors may be judged from the fact that on the only day on which I had a shooting-companion I made a wager with him at luncheon-time that I would bag three brace while I was smoking a single cigar, which was to be kept lighted. And I won.

In those days "drives" for grouse were not as common in Scotland as I believe they are now. Lord Dalhousie usually had one on Saturdays, and on such occasions shot himself, using a very light gun (28-bore Purdy, I think), his gouty fingers being unable to grasp the barrel, so as to check the recoil of a larger weapon. Even with this disadvantage he did considerable execution, and I always found him with several dead birds round his box.

For these drives guns were invited from the neighbouring moors. At one in which I took part Lord Cairns was present, coming from his "shooting" (I think, called Edzell) close by. He happened to be in the next box to me, when the line of guns was under a long bank with a slope nearly approaching the perpendicular, some six feet high. A brace of grouse coming towards me, I killed one in front, and when the other had passed between me and Lord Cairns I most fortunately killed it also, just as it was going out of sight over the bank. At the same moment I heard a loud ejaculation, followed by the strong language which usually proceeds from an angry man. A pellet had struck the Lord Chancellor about an inch under the eye, and he was not unnaturally indignant at what appeared a reckless shot. I was, however, able to point to my bird dead at a spot from which lines drawn to our respective boxes would have formed almost a right angle. If, therefore, the shot came from my gun, it must have glanced from a stone in

the bank at the top of which the bird was lying. A rebound of this kind, however, is so extraordinary that I have always had a suspicion that the shot was a spent one from a more distant box, especially as it only just entered the skin. But however this may have been, I shouldered the responsibility, and of course expressed extreme regret, which, when the circumstances were explained, was received in good part. Some years afterwards, when meeting Lord Cairns at a party at Lord Derby's, he alluded good-humouredly to the affair, and, I was glad to hear, had suffered only very temporary inconvenience.

At the beginning of September I went to St. Andrews, and for the first time of my life saw the game of golf. On the introduction of Mr. Elliot, who with his wife, Lady Charlotte, were very hospitable to me, I became a temporary member of "The Royal and Ancient" Club, and made acquaintance with many enthusiastic golfers, among them Mr. Whyte Melville and his son, the author of *Digby Grand* and other books which had delighted my younger days. Golf had at once for me a strange attraction; but after those few days spent at St. Andrews I had no further opportunity of playing it until I started a club in Hong Kong seventeen years afterwards.

Subsequently in that autumn I paid shooting visits to my friend Walter Morrison at Malham Tarn, almost, if not quite, the highest inhabited house in England, and to Sir Matthew Wilson at Eshton. Yorkshire birds, coming to maturity earlier than those of Scotland, are too wild to be approached with dogs after the first day or two of the season, and the shooting at both of these places was by drives. One of the beats at Malham is on the side of Pen-y-gent, one of the highest mountains in England, and there was thus a great extent of view from the boxes, which much adds to the excitement of the sport. Sometimes on this beat I have seen many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of grouse on the wing at the same moment.

The late autumn was mostly spent at Brighton, which

was recommended to me as specially invigorating. In the winter I paid a flying visit to Pau and Cannes, which my Aunt Grey, at a very advanced age, still made her winter quarters. Pau, which is so beautiful in fine weather—the view of the Pyrenees across the rich valley of the Gard being hardly to be surpassed in loveliness—is most depressing when the heavens are unpropitious; and as it rained steadily for three days, I was driven away, and made the very unpleasant cross-journey to the Riviera.

Cannes I found much enlarged during the six years of my absence, but assuredly not improved, the increase of building and enclosure having in many directions shut out the view of the Mediterranean. Except the Vallombrosas and my own belongings, scarcely anyone remained of the society I had previously known there. I had intended, however, to remain a week or two at all events, but was suddenly called away by urgent business to England after a stay of only four or five days. The Vallombrosas renewed their kindly hospitality, and at a party there, chiefly composed of French Legitimists, my hostess introduced me to the Duchesse de Castries, in conversation with whom I found to my surprise that my capital in St. Lucia had been named after one of her husband's family. I did not know previously that the family still existed; but my surprise arose chiefly from the fact that the name is pronounced "Castre," so that I did not at first recognise it.

Just before leaving again for the West Indies I spent a very agreeable week at Burley-on-the-Hill, the beautiful place of my Oxford friend, George Finch, then and still member for the county of Rutland. Among a large party staying at the house I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Miss Montgomery, the author of that most touching of stories, *Misunderstood*. We had a good day's shooting the day I left, and I remember it specially from the fact that the carriage to take me away having come up to the edge of the cover, I was fortunate enough, just before I got into it, to kill the only woodcock of the bag.

This may have been an augury of good fortune. The following day in London I first made acquaintance with her who was destined to be my wife. Immediately afterwards I was again on board the *Seine* bound for the West Indies.

I have forgotten to mention that while in London at my brother Henry's house (which was then in Great Cumberland Place) I met at dinner two friends of his who had been his contemporaries at Balliol, one of them George Glyn, afterwards created Lord Wolverton, the other Edward Baring, afterwards created Lord Revelstoke. When I had replied as might be expected to the question as to how, when I was in Guiana, I had liked Governor A., they with one accord said that they also had good reason to remember him, when he was Premier of Canada, in connection with the establishment of the Grand Trunk Railway, in which they had both taken a large, and, I believe, unfortunate interest.

CHAPTER VI

Return to St. Lucia—Reception there—Chaotic condition of law in the island—Undertake the compilation of a Civil Code—Move for introduction of central factory system to counteract French sugar bounties—Visit Martinique to see system at work—Difficulties of introduction into St. Lucia—The subject causes my return to England—Roman Catholic Archbishop removes chief curé—Decline to pay salary to successor pending appeal to Rome.

ON my return to St. Lucia I was cordially received, the enthusiasm of the coloured people showing itself in noisy and somewhat embarrassing demonstrations. They followed and surrounded my horse as I rode up the Morne, cheering, screaming, and waving handkerchiefs. It was a relief to find peace in my house.

During my absence Mr. Armstrong, a barrister of Lower (French) Canada, had been apointed Chief Justice, and had arrived in the island. His attention had at once been attracted to the unsatisfactory state of the law, the ordinary uncertainty of which was increased by vagueness of knowledge as to what law was actually in force. The *coutume de Paris* was perhaps still valid, in so far as it had not been altered. But many modifications had been made by Louis XVI., under pressure from the flowing tide of republicanism, and others were introduced after the Revolution, all of which must be supposed to have been in force at the period of the cession to England, though owing partly to hazy knowledge of them, and partly perhaps to anti-republican sentiment, they were little if at all recognised. When it is added that there had been many decisions on the part of the Court of Appeal of the Windward Islands, which was composed of English judges unin-

structed in the Civil Law, and sometimes, as I was told, expressing open contempt for it as being French, it may easily be understood that, even apart from the doings of the late Chief Justice, legal matters were in a state of almost hopeless chaos. To restore some nearer approach to certainty, Mr. Armstrong proposed to me to introduce the English versions of the Civil Code and the Code of Civil Procedure of Lower Canada, with only some slight alterations.

Though I had formerly passed a comprehensive examination in Civil Law, I had never before seen the Lower Canada codes. On reading them, in order to form a judgment upon their suitability for the intended purpose, I quickly found the French version to be a very able compilation founded for the most part on the Code Napoleon, and as regards the commercial portion, upon English law. But I observed at the same time that the English version, all but the commercial chapters, must have been prepared by those to whom English was not a familiar language, and that while no doubt of great use when printed alongside the French, it would be apt to mislead frequently when appearing alone.[1] The printing of both versions would not only double the expense, but would tend to perpetuate the French language in the island, which was for many reasons undesirable. On the other hand, the English version would for the above reason require much amendment to be satisfactory by itself. It occurred to me also that while this code would, no doubt, be sufficiently intelligible to properly educated lawyers, there were many terms in it which would produce hopeless confusion in the minds of the local practitioners, most of whom had had but very limited opportunities for legal education. For this reason I deemed absolutely necessary a Chapter of Interpretation—

[1] As one of many instances of such ambiguities, the term "execution" with reference to a will, which in the ordinary acceptation means the act of signature, is used in the Canadian Code to signify the exercise of their functions by executors.

a want which, as I was subsequently informed by Mr. Henry Reeve,[1] had been felt in connection with other codes even in the most civilised countries.[2] Furthermore, I found various provisions in this otherwise excellent code which, as savouring of priestly influence, I could have no part in legalising.

To make the necessary amendments and improvements described would involve much labour and delay; and as Mr. Armstrong was most anxious to bring into force some fixed code at once, I had much difficulty in impressing him with my views. When, however, he at length came to see the matter in the same light as myself, he gave a loyal assent, and he agreed to read the codes over with me, clause by clause, advising me, from his experience of this law in practice, as to the probable effect of suggested alterations and assisting me in making the English more intelligible when divested of the French version. For the former of these purposes he proved very useful, but not for the latter. For though coming from an English portion of Lower Canada (now Quebec), he was obviously more familiar with French, and was thus unable to see or to correct defects in the English translation.

The work proved to be very heavy, as in the course of

[1] Registrar of the Privy Council and the accomplished Editor of the *Edinburgh Review*.

[2] This Chapter of Interpretation cost me much greater labour even than I had anticipated. Though it was finished at last, and met with expert approval, its difficulties proved to be such as sometimes almost to lead me to despair of overcoming them. To give in a few lines the meaning of a term, the definition of which occupies several pages of a legal text-book, is in itself difficult enough, and is rendered still more so when it is found, as I did in some cases, that of a number of high legal authorities no two exactly agree. Fortunately, their errors corrected one another, and enabled me, I hope, to avoid them all. To give an idea, however, of the labour required to arrive at a satisfactory result, I may mention that the words "*delict*" and "*quasi-delict*" occupied me several days, the final definition having been arrived at only after many failures, as covering either too much or too little. Indeed, my experience in this matter led me to think possibly true the story that an attempt to codify English Criminal Law was given up because the experts employed could not agree upon a definition of murder.

reading many improvements suggested themselves, requiring much consideration to make satisfactorily, and my spare hours were largely occupied with this task during the greater part of the time passed in St. Lucia in the subsequent two and a half years. In March, April, and May of 1873, and for several months of 1874, Mr. Armstrong came up to the Morne on most days, and we spent two or more hours in reading. Some corrections would be made by me at the time, but others, requiring more care, I made in the intervals, and read them to the Chief Justice afterwards.

Soon after my return my attention was directed to a movement, begun during my absence, towards the introduction into St. Lucia of the central sugar factory system, which had proved most successful in the neighbouring French island of Martinique. There had been ideas, more or less vague, on this subject among the local colonists for some years past, and these had assumed a somewhat more definite form since the publication in the Parliamentary Blue Book of my report on the island for 1870, which had attracted the attention of Lord Rosebery. In that report, some twenty-nine years before the subject was taken up by Mr. Chamberlain, I drew attention to the effects certain to ensue from the policy of bounty upon the export of sugar which had been, or was being, adopted by various foreign countries, and to the necessity of special effort to meet an ever-growing danger. I suggested that one of these should be the introduction of the central factory system, which had already shown such satisfactory results in Martinique, pointing out at the same time the special advantage which it afforded to small cultivators, unable to afford expensive machinery, who could obtain from it a better reward for their labour, while at the same time avoiding the risk of manufacture.

Various deputations on this subject came to me ; and I promised to give to the matter my best attention, feeling sure that without the provision of some remedy, the important sugar industry of the island was doomed to extinc-

tion. But the reduction of the central factory idea into practical form presented many difficulties, some of which were probably peculiar to St. Lucia. There was a not incomprehensible reluctance on the part of the owners of most of the larger plantations already established to give up the complete control which they had hitherto enjoyed both of cultivation and manufacture; and so, while I preferred that the first experiment should be made in districts of the island where a sufficient supply of canes was already assured, I was compelled to give up all contemplation of this, owing to the prohibitory price demanded there for cane contracts. No planter at either Soufrière or Vieuxfort, where were the principal estates, would consider any price less than the highest rate paid in Martinique ; and as the success of the more recent factories which had been compelled to give this high rate was not as yet assured, I felt that it would be unsafe to start on such a basis in an island where the conditions were, in several respects, less favourable.

After consultation with one or two French experts whom I induced to come to the island for the purpose of inspecting and reporting upon the locality, and its suitableness as the site of a central factory, I determined to make the effort to establish one in the valley of Grand Cul-de-sac, within view from the south side of my house on the Morne. But the proprietors, previously liberal of promises, became difficult to deal with when they thought the selection of the site definitely made. Negotiations about the acquisition of the necessary land, about the right of way for the factory tramways, about the supply of canes and the price to be paid for them, and about advances of money in aid of cultivation, all of them necessarily conducted by myself, occupied several weeks, and occasioned a voluminous correspondence ; I then encountered a degree of grasping narrow-mindedness which I now feel ought to have been to me a deterrent warning. At length, however, all seemed sufficiently settled by provisional contracts to enable me to

bring the matter before the Legislative Council, with a view to a public guarantee of interest for some years on the capital necessary for the provision and working of the factory. After a prolonged debate, which was for the most part favourable to the scheme, my proposals were eventually carried unanimously; and I was authorised to proceed to England with the object of gaining the sanction of the scheme by the Secretary of State and of obtaining the necessary capital.

Before proceeding on this mission I paid a visit to Martinique for the purpose of seeing in operation some of the factories there. Crossing the thirty miles of sea, which separates the two islands, in the little coasting steamer which local enterprise had recently procured, I arrived at Fort de France, and was hospitably entertained in his house by Admiral Cloué, then Governor of the island.

The contrast with St. Lucia, presented by the comparatively civilised appearance of Martinique, could not but strike the most unobservant spectator. Travellers who in very short visits pass judgment without any adequate knowledge or thought of the circumstances, have put down this difference to misgovernment on the part of England; but, in fact, the principal of several causes is the earlier settlement of Martinique and the importation thither of much greater numbers of African slaves. Europeans also were thus attracted in greater numbers, so that, despite the extremely rapid increase of population in St. Lucia, the people of Martinique in my time outnumbered those of St. Lucia to the extent of about five to one, though the area of the two islands is in the proportion of only three to two. The wider extent of cultivation which can thus be undertaken in Martinique for export purposes, and which is necessary for the support of the inhabitants, naturally creates much larger sources of revenue; and this advantage is largely increased by the heavy expenditure (£100,000 to £150,000) which is annually incurred by France for the support of its colony, while England for many years previous to my time

had on St. Lucia spent nothing at all. I may mention, moreover, that density of population, which in Martinique is almost equal to that of Belgium, has had much the same effect as in Barbados, creating for the negro an increased necessity for work. On the other hand, the abundance of vacant or extremely cheap land enables the St. Lucian by a few days' labour on his own behalf to supply himself with all necessaries (in which clothing is hardly included) and frees him from any compulsion to work for others.

But whatever the causes, the contrast referred to was indeed great. Huge sugar factories in all directions were active, and instead of the indifferent bridle-paths of St. Lucia there were well-engineered and well-kept carriage-roads. The towns, too (though resembling those of St. Lucia as regards cobble-stoned streets with drains in the middle), had reached in many respects a much higher level of civilisation than those of my own island.

After examining two or three sugar factories and seeing other points of interest, I took leave of my kind host and hostess with the cordial expression of a hope that they would be able to pay me a return visit as soon as my English mission was finished. This hope was not, however, to be gratified, as when I returned to St. Lucia in the following February Admiral Cloué had been succeeded by another Governor.

Though a more active Government in St. Lucia, and something more of sympathetic interest on the part of England, might no doubt have rendered less striking the contrast above noticed, it is to the credit of the Government of St. Lucia that for some twelve years previous to my time it had been governed with no troops nearer than Barbados, and without discontent sufficiently acute to lead to serious disturbance. In Martinique, on the contrary, there had been a very dangerous rising only three years before, and I noticed a scowl on the faces of many of the coloured people, which was very different from the cheery looks to which I had become accustomed in St. Lucia.

The white inhabitants told me that they would not be safe without the garrison and ships-of-war in the harbour of Fort de France, and this was confirmed afterwards by a French admiral who visited me when I was administering the government of Trinidad.

I had intended leaving for England immediately after quitting Martinique, but was delayed for a fortnight (that being the interval between the steamer departures) by some of those worries resulting from misconduct in office which had been so unpleasantly frequent in my previous experience, the annoyance being the greater in this case, as occurring amid all the difficulties connected with arrangements for the proposed central factory.

There was also another matter. The Archbishop of Port of Spain, who exercised ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the Roman Catholic priests in the island, had for some unknown reason suddenly transferred to an inferior cure, in another island, M. Trouette, the Curé of Castries and Vicaire Forain, who was extremely popular in his parish both with whites and coloured. As I myself had for him both respect and regard, I willingly forwarded a largely signed petition to the Archbishop, praying for a reconsideration of the case. But its prayer was refused, and another priest was appointed as curé. Trouette, still remaining in the colony, appealed to Rome, and it then became a question as to whom the official salary was to be paid. The Archbishop requested, indeed almost demanded, a decision in favour of the priest newly appointed. But after consideration and correspondence I declined to accede, determining to withhold payment until the last word of the Church had been spoken, and my decision on this point was upheld by the Secretary of State. Rome, however, supported the episcopal authority, and during my absence in England M. Trouette left St. Lucia, much to my regret, as he was one of the extremely few well-educated men in the island.

CHAPTER VII

Efforts on behalf of central factory system in England—Country visits—Meet (fifteenth) Lord Derby and Colonel Stanley (present Lord Derby), each afterwards Colonial Secretary—Lord Tweeddale (eighth Marquis)—Chatsworth and seventh Duke of Devonshire—Hawarden and Mr. Gladstone—My negro valet—Stonor and the family there—Difficulties in connection with Central Factory Company and unsatisfactory solution—Apsley House and Mr. Delane, editor of *The Times*—Engaged to be married—Correspondence with Colonial Office.

IMMEDIATELY on arrival in London I set about the endeavour to convince the Colonial Department, not as to the advantages of the central factory system, which are self-evident, but as to the absolute necessity of Government assistance for the introduction of the system into St. Lucia. The correspondence on this subject and on the form which this assistance should take occupied several months; and it was finally settled that instead of giving a guarantee of interest which I had proposed, the colony should subscribe £25,000, to be raised by loan, towards an enterprise estimated to cost £100,000. Meanwhile I was not otherwise idle, visiting Scotland several times and Paris twice for the purpose of discussing with experts questions relative to the supply of the necessary capital and machinery. On one of these journeys I went over the great works of Messrs. Cail and Cie., near Paris. This firm had constructed most of the *usines* in Martinique, and their great experience of this kind of work and their high reputation led me to incline strongly towards employing them for my purpose. As will be seen, however, events and other opinions caused me to be overruled in this respect. I understood that Messrs. Cail had been remarkably

successful. Though they employed over 4,000 workmen, they had never had any strike, which they attributed to the fact that the greater part of the men had a direct interest in the business, and in addition to their wages participated in its profits.

During the following autumn and winter, in the intervals of correspondence, I paid several visits to Mr. Pender (who had promised financial support to my projects) at Minard Castle, on Loch Fyne, and others to Sir Charles Tennant at the Glen, to Walter Morrison at Malham Tarn, to Lord Tweeddale at Yester, to the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth, to Sir Stephen Glynne at Hawarden, and to Lord Camoys at Stonor.

At Minard, where I became engaged to my wife, there were, at each of my visits, a large number of guests. Among them were on one occasion the late Lord and Lady Derby and Mr. and Lady Constance Stanley (the present Lord and Lady Derby). Both of these brothers subsequently became my chiefs at the Colonial Office. Walking one day with (the late) Lord Derby, I had the advantage of discussing with him many colonial subjects. As he had already been Foreign Minister, he surprised me by saying that the most interesting portion of his official life was when he temporarily acted for his father in the Colonial Department. He at the same time expressed a fear that that office would never fall to him again, meaning, I suppose, that it was regarded as inferior to that which he had subsequently held. Had he remained a Conservative, it is probable that his fear would have been justified by the event; but on his joining Mr. Gladstone, that which I presume to have been his wish was gratified.

Having arrived at Minard on one of these occasions after a rapid journey from Paris, I was attacked by violent inflammation of the lungs—the result of a cold caught in crossing the Channel—and for a day or two my life was in considerable danger.

At the Glen what would have been otherwise a pleasant

visit was somewhat spoiled by an attack of malarial fever. Fortunately, under the kindly care of Mrs. (the late Lady) Tennant, it proved a short one, and I was well enough to be driven out next day by Miss Tennant (the late Mrs. Gordon Duff), then the eldest survivor of five sisters, several of whom have become well known for exceptional cleverness. This young lady, who afterwards, as Mrs. Gordon Duff, became a great friend, had a splendid pair of cobs, which she called "Bryant and May," because they were such "good matches!"

At Yester I heard many most interesting experiences from old Lord Tweeddale, especially about the Peninsular War and his government of Madras. He confirmed what I had heard the previous year from Sir William Gomm[1] at Brighton about the extraordinary scenes which took place after the storming of Badajos, and the madness which seized upon our soldiers under the excitement of relief from the long siege; and he astonished me by telling of his having at that time taken a pack of hounds all through Spain and, I think, into France. Lord Tweeddale, then very deaf, was evidently a man of exceptional ability, and by careful attention had brought his estate, which had been left to him in by no means satisfactory condition, into wonderful order. He ascribed the good health which he enjoyed at his advanced age largely to the fact that he had for years past taken a long drive every day at a very rapid pace, his horses being, for English trotters, exceptionally fast.

During this visit to Yester there came over to see her grandfather Lady Susan Bourke (afterwards Lady Connemara). I regarded her with special interest as the daughter of Lord Dalhousie (the first and last Marquis of that name), who from what I had read of him seemed to

[1] The mention of Sir William Gomm's name reminds me that when playing billiards with him in his house at Brighton he received a letter announcing his appointment to be Constable of the Tower. The news caused him a pleasurable excitement which I should hardly have anticipated in one of his advanced age, who had already received so many honours. He explained the cause as being that the office had been held by his old chief, the Duke of Wellington.

be a model proconsul. Though dying of his work at the age of forty-six, he had left a mark upon India such as has rarely been equalled by any of his predecessors or successors, and has perhaps been surpassed by none.

One of Lord Tweeddale's guests on this occasion was General Rowan, in whose company I had some excellent low-ground shooting. He had been formerly A.D.C. to our host when Governor of Madras. I had known him years before in New York, where he held for a long time a very singular official position. He was, I believe, supposed to be occupied with a lawsuit by the British War Office against an American firm, in respect of rifles supplied for the Crimean War. But to the outsider his post seemed a sinecure, his time and thoughts to all appearances being exclusively engaged in the enjoyment of New York society, in which for five or more years successively he was a well-known figure.

At Malham Tarn I had another pleasant shoot with my friend Walter Morrison. At a drive at Pen-y-gent a shot from one of the guns covered me with pellets, which coming, fortunately, from a distance, did no harm. On my mentioning this to a keeper, he said, "Oh, sir, that was Mr. ——; he has used scores of cartridges, and you are about all he has hit the whole day."

At Chatsworth I found myself and Sir James Lacaita the only strangers amid a large family party. Pole-Carew, whom I had met the previous year, was scarcely an exception, he being a cousin of Lady Frederick Cavendish. But owing to the kindly courtesy of Lady Louisa Egerton, who acted as hostess, and other members of the family, I experienced no isolation whatever, and my visit was in every way agreeable. One day a sharp frost permitted skating on the adjacent lake, and it was a curious experience after so many years in the tropics to practise again gyrations learned in Canada, which before the day of artificially frozen rinks were not so common in England as now. I passed much of my time in examining the great

collection of art treasures, and in the library, which Lacaita, who knew it well, made specially interesting.

But what perhaps interested me at Chatsworth most of all was the personality of the Duke of Devonshire himself, who, having all the courtesy and dignity, without a particle of the arrogance, of the typical "Grand Seigneur," united with them scientific capacity and other attainments of the highest order, and was besides one of the best, most considerate, and most successful landlords of England. One of his many admirable qualities was a high sense of duty, forcing him continually to do what cost him actual suffering. He considered that his position required him to entertain London society, and he consequently did so largely, though his intense natural shyness rendered it a severe task. The same shyness made him very silent at dinner, though his benevolent face and his pleasing voice, when he did speak, showed that moroseness was not the cause.

At Hawarden was a large party, which was rendered specially interesting by the commanding presence of Mr. Gladstone. Mrs. Gladstone acted as hostess for her brother. I for the most part occupied the position of a mere listener to the great man's talk, and I deeply regret that I omitted to take notes of many things on many subjects—all worth remembering—which I heard from his lips, and have now unhappily escaped my memory. One day I watched him cutting down a tree, and having seen lumberers at work in Canada, as well as among the hardwood trees of Guiana, I was amazed at a skill which seemed quite equal to theirs. Never a stroke wasted, each one falling exactly on the right spot—a feat only to be appreciated by those who have attempted it. The vigour also was remarkable which enabled him at his, even then, advanced age to bear this violent labour without any apparent fatigue.

Among other guests in the house was young Lord Aberdeen, in whom Mr. Gladstone, no doubt owing to his

friendship with his grandfather, took a special interest, paying him great attention. Lord Aberdeen was then nominally a Conservative, but I foresaw the effect on his plastic mind of the great man's seductive talk, and in a letter at the time foretold that he would before long take Mr. Gladstone's side in politics. Time soon proved the truth of my prediction. Many older heads, I imagine, may well have had their most matured judgment disturbed by half an hour's talk with such a man. I recall that Mr. Gladstone was specially severe upon the House of Lords for having thrown out a Bill for carrying the District Railway close to the Mansion House, and thus causing the nearest station to be at such a long distance from that centre. He ascribed this to aristocratic inconsiderateness for the welfare of the people.

I noticed that one or two of the guests brought axes with them—literally I mean, of course—but their manifest inferiority to Mr. Gladstone in using them suggested a doubt whether their enthusiasm for the exercise were not assumed for the occasion.

One evening at Hawarden there was a servants' ball, attended by all the guests in the house, including the late Duchess of Westminster, who had come over from Eaton to dinner. I had with me in England a black valet, Samuel Cox, a native of Barbados, who had been in my service several years, and I was most amused in observing that he was in great request among the ladies' maids, and was evidently enjoying himself vastly. I had often during the year been surprised at the warmth of his reception by English servants, which seemed to show that colour antipathy is not instinctive, but largely a matter of prejudice. In the previous summer, culinary pupils not being permitted at Brooks's, I had procured for the man lessons in cooking from the *chef* at the Carlton Club, who found him very quick at learning and gave him a strong testimonial of efficiency. One Sunday, when crossing St. James's Park, I was surprised to see a black man with a good-looking

English girl on each arm. It proved to be Mr. Cox, with two of his female fellow-pupils. Again, in the autumn at a certain country-house, one of the valets called him "Sambo" at the steward's-room table. This was regarded as insulting by the maids, who forthwith sent the offender to Coventry; and in order to be restored to favour he was obliged to get up at the table, on the following day, and make formal apology, addressing the injured man as "Mr. Samuel Cox"! On another occasion, being summoned suddenly to London, I was obliged to leave another country-house very early in the morning, while it was still dark. Getting into the carriage, I was kept waiting by Cox. Looking about to see what had become of him, I at once recognised the cause of delay. Mr. Cox was receiving a very fervid send-off from several maids who had risen thus early for the purpose!

My visit to Stonor I hardly expected to be agreeable, for though I liked much of what I had seen of old Lord and Lady Camoys, I knew they had a shrewd suspicion of my engagement, not yet announced, to one in whom they took special interest. I imagined, therefore, the invitation to be partly with a view to a judgment on my fitness. However, I was quickly made free from embarrassment on this account. Not only the host and hostess, but their son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Stonor (the latter the daughter of the great Sir Robert Peel), contributing in various ways to make my visit a pleasant one. The Stonors, as an old Roman Catholic family, kept up the practice of having a priest-chaplain always staying in the house with them. But I saw him only at dinner, and he withdrew on the appearance of dessert. My first experience of partridge-driving was here, all the shooting of my boyhood having been over dogs—a form of sport which, as regards this kind of game, steam-reapers and other causes had already brought almost to an end. My visit to Stonor proved to be only too short, and the Frank Stonors became friends whom I grievously missed on our return from long absence in Fiji, both having died prematurely in the interval.

During all these visits I was continually in correspondence, official and otherwise, on the subject of my mission, and had also various interviews in London on the same subject with financiers, brokers, and others. I encountered everywhere reluctance to embark money in any West Indian enterprise, and was often told that the only chance of "floating" my company would be to pay ten per cent. commission for underwriting—or £10,000. But, entirely unacquainted with City ways, I regarded such proposals as improper, and without any hesitation declined to entertain them. I soon found that without underwriting the difficulties in the way of starting the company were very great, and more than once seemed to render the prospect of success hopeless. Innocently unaware, also, of the practice of securing influential directors by the offer of free shares, I was amazed and repelled by suggestions that I should avail myself of it. After many disappointments, I succeeded ultimately in obtaining an absolutely honest Board, all the members of which agreed to pay for their proper quota of shares, and the prospectus was published.

The issue proved a bitter disappointment. The amount of subscriptions was wholly inadequate, and the larger share of them was on the part of my own and my future wife's family and other immediate friends. Complete failure seemed imminent, when a proposal was made to which I very reluctantly consented. It was that a large portion of the unsubscribed capital should be taken by a firm of mechanical engineers who would supply the requisite machinery, one of the firm being placed on the Board. The firm in question was of high repute, and the terms offered for the necessary plant and work were more favourable than those of Messrs. Cail and other firms which had been approached. But, foreseeing great difficulties in the way of an English firm carrying on operations in a colony where French was the language of the people, I should still have preferred Messrs. Cail, notwithstanding their higher terms, in that their experience in Martinique, and the ready assistance

which they could obtain on emergency from their many skilled workmen in that island, would stand them in good stead. This preference, however, was necessarily overruled by the circumstances (though subsequent experience showed it to have been well grounded), and the above arrangement was duly settled.

During this winter there took place an occurrence which at the time made upon me a great impression. Dining one night at Apsley House (where I had previously been shown by his son the bedroom of the great Duke, with a little iron bedstead and other modest furniture exactly as he had used it), I met there a party of intimates to whom I was a complete outsider. Besides the Duchess's brother, since become a great friend, Lord John Hay (now Admiral of the Fleet), there were Delane (editor of *The Times*), Fleming (commonly known as "The Flea"), Alfred Montgomery, and Henry Calcraft. During dinner, Delane having somewhat imperiously expressed an opinion on a colonial subject with which I believed myself well acquainted, I ventured to disagree, to the obvious astonishment of the other guests, the great editor included. Walking up Piccadilly afterwards to Brooks's with John Hay, he remarked in a tone which I fancied quite serious, "Well, you have done for yourself!" On my asking for explanation, "No one," he replied, "ever ventures to differ with Delane, and you may depend he won't forget you if he gets a chance." I was then unaware of the awe in which the editor of *The Times* was held, and the view expressed as to the deference paid to his opinions was not wholly illusory. But the anticipation of Delane's vindictiveness was meant as a joke; only not seeing it at the time, it caused me some apprehension. My fears proved to be groundless, and I have since learned from John Hay, as well as others, that Delane was really one of the fairest and most amiable of men.

During this visit to England I had correspondence with the Colonial Office on several other subjects beside the central factory, especially with regard to the difficulty,

which proved to be great, of obtaining competent medical men to fill the newly constituted offices in St. Lucia. In fact, this official visit to England was by no means a sinecure; as some of my experiences might suggest, and whether I was in London or the country, there were few days on which more or less work had not to be done on behalf of the colony.

CHAPTER VIII

Return to St. Lucia: reception there—Satisfactory result of recent measures—Visit of Governor—Interview with negro proprietors—Central Factory Ordinance passed—Repartee of Mr. Robert Lowe—Arrival of U.S. ship-of-war: desertion therefrom—Earthquake—Corpus Christi celebration: an amusing incident—Trouble caused by local lawyers—A forest temple—Funeral panegyrics—St. Lucia funerals—Singular phenomenon—An accident—Archbishop of Trinidad and religious endowment—Visit Soufrière—Mr. and Mrs. Quintin Hogg—Curious work of lunatic—Colonial Office delay.

ON reaching St. Lucia again, in March, 1874, and meeting with a specially enthusiastic reception, I had the satisfaction of learning that some of my work had had a beneficial result in a very unexpected direction. The high wages given in Trinidad had proved so attractive to the people of the neighbouring islands that 3,689 had gone thither from Grenada and 1,633 from St. Vincent, while only twenty had left St. Lucia. In mentioning these figures to the Legislative Council, on the authority of Mr Rawson, the Governor-in-Chief, I was enabled to add that the comparative immunity of St. Lucia from this depopulation was attributed by him to the measures adopted in recent years for improving the condition of the labouring classes.

With regard to the events of 1874–5, I have the means of refreshing my memory from notes, taken by me at the time—an advantage which is wanting with respect to by far the greater part of my life. From my letters to my wife, preserved in the form of a journal, I give some extracts, omitting the abundant references to my work on the Codes of Civil Law and Procedure and the business connected with the central factory. The former is sufficiently described elsewhere; and, instead of the notes record-

ing the daily labour, the manifold annoyances, and the extremely voluminous correspondence caused by the latter task, I will give here a short account such as will present a general idea of the events and transactions to which they relate.

Having successfully accomplished the object of my mission to England, which was expected to confer so great a boon upon the Cul-de-sac planters, I had imagined that the preliminary arrangements made before my departure would render the final settlement with them a matter of comparatively little difficulty. But regarding the benefit of the factory as secured to them, they generally endeavoured to exact concessions as the condition of fulfilling their promises. The owner, too, of the proposed site of the factory, who had agreed to give it free of cost, now demanded an extravagant price for it. To institute suits at law was impracticable, and so I was forced into negotiations with each. When the correspondence on this subject seemed likely to be interminable, I quickly brought it to an end by an offer to the planters of Soufrière to place the factory at the other end of the island. The mere offer brought the obstructives to their senses, and they became more amenable to reason. Thus after many weeks of delay a settlement was reached, and the contractors could commence their work.

During the two following years the business connected with the factory occupied me several hours each day. The frequent letters to the directors in England proved to be specially irksome, as I was on many occasions obliged to copy them myself. Altogether, this business, the work upon the codes (which I had determined, if possible, to finish before leaving the island), and the ordinary task of administration involved an accumulation of labour which proved to be too much for my strength, and caused the complete breakdown which occurred in 1875. Needless to say, had I had an inkling beforehand how incongruous with my position as Administrator would prove the necessary

business relations with people of such a character, no inducement would have sufficed to make me undertake so ungrateful a task.

The following paragraphs, preceded by dates, are extracts from my diary:—

March 25th.—Interview with Dr. H., the new head of Medical Department. Was gratified to hear from him that my Medical and Poor Relief Law (which was in many respects entirely my own) has been highly approved in the other colonies and that a similar measure is about to be passed in Trinidad.

March 26th.—Sent circular to members of Council as a conciliatory measure, in view of my having pledged the credit of the island without consulting them, and in defence of the bargain sanctioned by the Secretary of State.

March 28th.—At half-past nine a.m. in walked unexpectedly, Mr. J., lately Governor of ——, on his way to assume the government of ——. He was accompanied by ——, who is largely interested in West Indian plantations; and I should have imagined his conversation to be specially directed to this gentleman's edification, but that it was entirely in accord with the character I had heard of him. Evidently the interests of the white minority, if not the sole object of his consideration, is, at least, that to which all others are subordinated. He is, nevertheless, a great favourite of the Colonial Office, for he has received unprecedentedly rapid promotion, and is likely to go further.[1] His visit has caused me low spirits; for if ever I am to rise, it must be by a very different road.

March 29th.—Engaged to-day in drafting a Barbadian Immigration Ordinance, in lieu of that passed last year and disallowed by the Secretary of State. The former ordinance was approved of by the Emigration Commissioners; but I suppose that Lord Kimberley, with a view to the contemplated confederation of the Windward Islands, deemed it desirable to conciliate the Barbadian magnates, who found

[1] This anticipation proved correct.

my law likely to prove too attractive to the redundant population, and fear that emigration will increase wages. I must now pass an emasculated law which will in all probability be comparatively useless, and the abject poverty of a portion of the Barbados people which we have the means of partially remedying must be allowed to continue.

April 1st.—A letter from Mr. Rawson saying that, but for the factory business, he should certainly have offered me the provisional appointment of Lieutenant-Governor of St. Vincent or Grenada; and he goes on to say that "You may therefore claim the merit of having sacrificed yourself for St. Lucia." I should not, however, regard such a change as promotion, except in name. For though the salary in each case is nearly double that of this place and "Lieutenant-Governor" is a more high-sounding title than "Administrator," neither island is in the least more important than this, and if I am to have no wider scope for my energies, I prefer to remain where I am.

One of our doctors has left his district without leave and been in town for three days, his patients meanwhile being entirely unprovided for. I have written for explanation. These doctors give more trouble than the whole of the rest of the civil staff, now that this has been weeded out and reorganised. Eyes and head suffering severely from glare. (This was evidently the first symptom of the affection, called by Sir Rutherford Alcock a light-stroke, which prostrated me in the following year.)

April 2nd.—Meeting of peasant proprietors, all black or nearly black, at my house. Spoke to them in explanation of the objects of the central factory, and chiefly to convince them that they were offered less than the larger proprietors, not because they were black, but simply because their canes were less valuable owing to the comparatively small quantity supplied at one time, the longer average time between cutting and delivery, and less careful cultivation. The men went away enthusiastic about giving their canes, and apparently well pleased with themselves.

April 5th.—The face of one of those who dined with me to-day reminded me of the saying, "No one could be half as wise as my Lord Thurlow looks." Being one of the colonial magnates whom I have come to know well, I should say that appearances were in this case specially deceptive.

April 7th.—Of three ordinances to be brought into Council this week, one, The Companies Status Ordinance, was drawn up for me by the Chief Justice, this being the first assistance of the kind I have received since December, 1870. Before my time all instructions to public officers were conveyed in official letters beginning, "Sir, I have the honour to be," and ending, "Your obedient Servant." If I had continued this practice, I should never have got through my work, but I long ago abandoned it for simple minutes headed with the name of the officer addressed. Saw to-day the new Vicaire Forain (the local vicegerent of the Archbishop of Trinidad). I made a difficulty about recognising him when he was appointed last year, and he was reported to have been very indignant. I must suppose that with Christian benevolence he has forgotten the matter now, as at parting he enclosed my hand in both of his with a gentle pressure. As far as I know he is a good, harmless man; though as he talks not a word of English, he assists to keep the people French, which is undesirable in an English colony.

April 9th.—At opening of Council to-day made the members a complimentary speech on rejoining them again. What I said was true of one or other of them, but had I said all that I knew and thought of others, it would have caused a volcanic eruption. Possibly I may have aroused even in these a spark of public spirit. The Central Factory Ordinance passed without a single dissentient voice, and unaltered, except—unprecedented fact—that one of the members actually suggested an increase of the loan from £25,000 to £30,000 to provide interest during construction. Barbados Immigration Ordinance also passed with like unanimity.

April 11th.—Letter from Rawson, who has just received my correspondence with the Colonial Office about the factory. He is abundant in praise. This is generous of him, as he has been ignored throughout the whole business. Rennie, Lieutenant-Governor of St. Vincent, and his wife came to breakfast. I like both. He has more than average brains.

April 14th.—Read with interest and some amusement the correspondence about ecclesiastical affairs in St. Lucia, which took place two years ago between the Secretary of State, Rawson, and self, now published in Blue Book, 17th June, 1873. Rawson must have been indeed angry at my disagreement with him. He can hardly have expected that I should see his despatches. As evidently the Secretary of State did not agree with him, his insinuations have done me no harm; and in any case I shall take no notice of them now, as he has done his best to make amends since.

April 19th.—Mail very late owing to head wind. At length, at four p.m., the gun from Fort Charlotte announced that the steamer was sighted. Usually I see her first, but she had been covered by a shower of rain, so that all my spasmodic rushes to the telescope were thrown away. You can hardly imagine what the mail means to me in this dreary isolation.

April 20th.—Ten at dinner. Bob Lowe's *mot* about x's and y's served me a good turn in relieving a very dull situation. [This story, which had reached me in a recent letter, was as follows: A young and somewhat "cheeky" member of the Conservative Government recently come into power, called across the table to Mr. Lowe at a dinner-party, "Well, Mr. Lowe, how do you like being an ex?" To which the reply was: "I should like it the better if we had been succeeded by the y's" (wise).]

April 25th.—Petition from the inhabitants of Castries praying for the efficient dredging of the harbour on the ground that R.M. Steamship Company contemplate making this, instead of Barbados, the port of call for the alternate

home steamer. This is only one of several cases where my ideas have been taken up years after they were expressed. The very notion of spending four or five thousand pounds on such an object would, before now, have been scouted.

May 4th.—Finished Regulations for Barbadian Immigration.

May 7th.—Am reading in odd moments Hayward's *Essays*. As collector of an amusing pot-pourri of stories, I am bound to say he attracts me. But from what little I have seen of the man, I can to a certain extent understand the bitterness of Disraeli in giving him the sobriquet of "Literary Louse," as living on other men's heads.

May 11th.—U.S. ship-of-war *Brooklyn* arrived, and her salute, returned by H.M.S. *Spartan*, woke the echoes of our little harbour. Received the captain's visit at my office. He was unable to come and dine, being already engaged to the captain of the *Spartan*. Though very unwell, I was sorry; for I never like a man-o'-war, especially a foreign one, to go away without some of the officers being entertained at Government House. Took a short ride, however, with the captain and three of his officers, they coming back to my house discussing brandy and soda, and admiring the view.

May 12th.—The *Brooklyn* sailed this morning. Extraordinary stories are told me about the condition of the ship. What is certain is that many of the sailors have deserted at every port, and that here at least one, braving the sharks, tried to escape by swimming, though the ship was anchored half a mile from shore. One of the officers of the *Spartan* was in a boat near her late in the evening when three shots from a revolver were fired at him, one bullet whizzing close to his ear. He had been mistaken for a deserter. A strange manner of proceeding in foreign water. At a dinner-party to-day was so ill I could hardly sit at table.

May 14th.—Dr. Carter, our new P.M.O., came and ordered me to leave off work entirely for three days. Took a short ride, and on my return found at my house

Farquharson and Holland, two officers of the *Spartan*, the former of the Dorsetshire family, one or more of whom are known to me—not one of the Invercauld people, of whom I used to see much in my boyhood; the latter, the son of the present Baronet,[1] Assistant Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office. I asked Captain Carter to send up some of his officers to dine and sleep when he could spare them, and he had unluckily chosen this night, when being ill, I had dined early. I managed to get them something to eat, however, and sailors' appetites supplied the sauce. We talked up to a late hour, discussing, among other subjects, the curious ignorance of the Colonial Office on some colonial matters, combined with its minute knowledge of others. In my opinion one at least of the clerks should have a knowledge of each colony derived from a visit to it.

May 21st.—At three p.m. occurred an earthquake, the fourth I have felt since I came here. The shock is usually accompanied by a dull grinding sound. But even when it is silent, as to-day, one recognises it at once by the fact that the windows rattle on both sides of the house, instead of only on one, as they do when moved by the wind. A "quake" which I felt in my first year here was much more severe, and split one of the brick arches of the north gallery. It lasted quite three-quarters of a minute, and was still continuing when I got clear outside. The house was rocking so that it seemed about to tumble on our heads. On that occasion the whole population of Castries and Soufrière was kneeling in the streets—a remarkable sight, which I regret having missed.

May 30th.—This being market-day, many countrywomen were carrying loads to town. The dexterity sometimes shown in this kind of carriage on the head is as remarkable as the enormous weight of the ordinary load. Any day a woman may be seen walking swiftly down this steep hill and balancing on her head, apparently in complete un-

[1] Afterwards Lord Knutsford, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

consciousness, a narrow uncorked French bottle, standing upright, and containing milk or some other liquid.

June 3rd.—The day after the mail is usually a bad one for me. Letters and newspapers have transported me into a different world, and then comes the reaction and sensibility to disagreeables at hand. Discovered to-day that the Colonial Engineer, who was appointed also for surveying work, is charging so enormous a price for private surveys as to render his further employment impossible. His office was constituted partly that there might be available here at least one trustworthy surveyor. A tariff must be fixed, and if he does not consent to it, he must go.

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June 4th.—This is Corpus Christi, which the people usually spend in praying, dancing, genuflecting to the carried about Host, and getting drunk. By immemorial custom a salute is fired from Morne Fortuné as the Host leaves the church. I object strongly to the practice for several reasons, and have contemplated putting an end to it; but hardly think it worth while to raise a storm of wrath. How singular are the notions of what will please God! The early Israelites apparently supposed that He would be gratified by burnt sacrifices. And now these Christians desire to honour Him, whom they regard as the Saviour of Humanity, with the noise of deadly weapons. An amusing account was given in the evening of the procession through the town. The people were praying on their knees, and some firing pistols as it passed—an odd combination. The priest poked one man in the procession with his umbrella for not marching fast enough. Instead of resenting the assault, the man went down on his knees in the muddy street, and crossing himself, begged pardon.

June 12th.—I am puzzled what to do about petitions, which are continually increasing in number, and to which, however absurd, I always reply. How utterly sick I am of the sight of "May it please your Honour!" The great majority of the people look upon me as a completely

absolute monarch, and the old French notion of paternal government has survived scarcely less among the upper class than in the lower. For many of the foremost people look for Government assistance, and are sometimes abjectly dependent upon it, in matters which Englishmen would deal with entirely by private enterprise.

June 17th.—Have managed to catch a *coup de vent*, and have a woodenly stiff neck in consequence. I wonder how it came about that stiffneckedness is almost synonymous with obstinacy. I never felt less obstinate than at this moment, and I fear that even my most cherished principles might prove weak if I were pressed just now.

June 18th.—Effusive letter of thanks from Fitzwilliam Dick, for whom I had done a singular commission—that of causing to be exhumed in Dominica and sent home to England the body of a relation who had died out here, and about whose despatch to the West Indies Dick seemed to have qualms of conscience.

June 20th.—An instance occurred to-day of the mischief done by the local lawyers. A boundary question, which had already caused serious trouble and threatened worse, had arisen between a French captain, who with his wife had settled in the interior, and some Africans liberated from slave-ships who had obtained land from a private proprietor. Having taken the trouble to hear both sides of the question, I felt sure that the matter might be amicably settled by a little tact and patience, backed by the African respect for the Governor. A meeting between the parties was arranged to-day at my office; but when I got there I received a notice from a lawyer that the case could not be settled by the Executive. Needless to say that "the Executive," as such, had no intention of interference, and I was merely acting as a friendly arbitrator to whom both parties had had recourse. There must now be an expensive lawsuit, which the lawyer had persuaded the ignorant African to enter upon as the best means of getting his way. Both sides will now ruin themselves.

June 22nd.—Even more amused to-day than usual by the loudly vociferated fine language of a black girl who acts as herdswoman to a number of cattle on the Morne. The other day I heard her say (her cows all have names): "Oh, Eustatia, stop your vagariousness!" To-day the form was: "Now, Jemima, don't you deviate from the right path!"

June 25th.—The Chief Justice, while engaged with me on the code to-day, told me that he had submitted some of my alterations of the Canadian Code to one of the best lawyers in Quebec, who highly approved of them and expressed astonishment at their being the work of an amateur. This is satisfactory; but, in fact, I am now scarcely an amateur in the ordinary sense. For there cannot be many, if any, professional lawyers who, within the last five years, have drafted so many legal provisions that have become actual law.

July 1st.—Long letter by the mail from Mrs. Frank Stonor, telling me much Society gossip and of the painful scene at —— House on the announcement of the engagement of Lord X. The Duke of Wellington has sent me some rhea (ramie) grass seeds to plant here as an experiment. But I must guess at the kind of cultivation required, as he has forgotten to tell me.

July 14th.—Rode down with McHugh to his little estate at the head of the Cul-de-sac valley. In one place near it four clumps of bamboos formed an almost perfect square, and their foliage intermingling far overhead, presented a wonderful likeness in green to what may be seen in a Gothic cathedral where the nave and transept cross one another. Hitherto since the days of the aboriginal Caribs this forest temple has remained almost undisturbed. But now the railway of the factory will pass within two hundred yards, and it is in contemplation to organise Sunday picnics to the place—a sad desecration. Heavy showers made us thoroughly wet through, and we galloped the whole way home.

July 28th.—To-day received from my legal adviser with-

out alteration the drafts of two ordinances which I had prepared in a hurry and knew to be defective in several points, and also a draft deed of the site of the factory prepared by the proprietor's lawyer. The latter I was advised to sign at once; and on my asking whether the title was all right, the reply was that it was sure to be. I, however, sent to the Registry and received entries of three mortgages which would have rendered the deed almost worthless. I also found that one of the proprietors had signed by attorney, and there was no verification of the power. Fancy my position if the factory had been erected on a site with a bad title!

July 30th.—Read to-day a French funeral panegyric, which, though not of course so absurd, reminds me by its extravagance of one which, when in 1859 I was on a visit to Governor Aiken at his plantation in South Carolina, he repeated to me as having been heard by him in Congress. It was as follows: "His name, sir, deserves to be written on the portals of heaven in letters of gold with a pen plucked from a seraph's wing and dipped in the concentrated milk of human kindness"!

July 21st.—Heard to-day of Lord Dalhousie's death. He was always very kind and hospitable to me, and would have been a good friend in other respects had I ever asked him. An old Carthusian himself, he came to Charterhouse on Founder's Day when I was orator, and proposed my health at the dinner afterwards.

August 7th.—Rode this afternoon over the range of mountains which form the backbone of the island to an estate in the north-east corner, where I passed the night. The country people, who had apparently heard of my coming, saluted me everywhere with gun-firing, rag-waving, and vociferous shouting as I passed.

August 8th.—Rode down to the sea early. The Atlantic was in good humour, and the waves, sometimes here eighteen to twenty feet high, now scarcely ruffled the surface and broke gently on the beach. With no land be-

tween me and England, imagination bridged the intervening space. A restive horse, eager to enjoy an unwonted stretch of level land, brought me back to the world around me, and that was indeed beautiful. High cliffs on either side, plants or shrubs clinging to them at every possible resting-place, and forest trees at the summit, with a long strip of yellow sand at the base, make as lovely a little bay as can well be imagined. A little stream rippled into the sea close to one of the cliffs; not a solitary human being was in sight. I noticed that the greater part of the more conspicuous vegetation was not indigenous, and probably sprung from seeds brought here by the French planters. Several kinds of cactus grew on the rocks; and aloes in every stage of growth, some with their long spikes standing high in the air, occupied every convenient ledge. Even the coconuts along the sand, with their stems twisted into fantastic shapes by the ever-blowing trade wind, are of foreign importation. But all add to the original loveliness. I longed for the rest of this quiet retreat, and it was with considerable regret that I rode back to Castries, the negroes saluting me on the road as before.

August 12th. — Attended in town the funeral of Mr. Joseph Goodman, a member of Council and brother of Mr. John Goodman, also a member, and one for whom I have considerable regard. The manner of funerals here is as follows: All persons who know the deceased, however distantly, or who wish to pay respect to his memory, collect at the house. The priest (there were in this instance three of them) arrives with a procession of acolytes and choristers, the whole in vestments more or less gorgeous. Some ceremony is performed in the house, and then in a few minutes the procession emerges again, followed by the coffin, a long line of people following, two and two, the men of all classes going first, and then the women, usually quite as numerous. After a twenty minutes' service in church the procession, in the same order, and lengthened by many accessions, proceeds to the cemetery. The negroes evidently enjoy a

funeral. They dress in their best, and have a chance of showing finery, on which is spent a very large proportion of their earnings. To-day I walked in the procession with the Chief Justice—he, poor man, rather low, owing to the departure yesterday for Canada of his wife and family.

August 18th.—Busy now preparing my estimates for 1875, which are complicated by the fact that I have determined to abolish the export duties and make up the deficit by increased import duties. For estimating revenue under these circumstances I have to do all the work in miniature which a Chancellor of the Exchequer has ready "cut and dried" for him by competent clerks. For instance, in order to calculate the effect of increased import duties, I have had myself to go through every single article one by one, and find the average of its importation in the last three years. I am in doubt whether to allow anything—and if so, how much—for decrease of consumption in consequence of increased duty. Two causes point to decrease, the one mentioned and also the low price of sugar, which makes the people poorer. But, on the other hand, there is the progress of the island, which has been steady for some years, and will now receive an additional stimulus. Although I have started an amount of public works since the beginning of last year, which has made the Colonial Office quite nervous, I find that up to the end of June last the ordinary revenue has increased enough to pay for the whole.

August 25th.—To-day occurred one of the grandest thunderstorms I ever witnessed. Each peal here begins like a rattling volley of musketry from twenty thousand men; then comes the booming of big guns; and then echoes from the mountains, at first loud, and dying away by slow degrees.

September 4th.—Looking on from a place where they could not see me, I was pleased to observe the factory labourers working with a will, and with only here and there any sign of the listless dawdling which usually characterises the negro. The women seemed even more active than the

men. One sturdy young amazon seemed to take delight in trotting away with three sleepers on her head, weighing probably 130 pounds avoirdupois. I was scarcely surprised to see that wheelbarrows were being used by the people, though it is a common West Indian belief that the negro cannot be induced to have anything to do with them.

September 11th.—A singularly still morning. As the sun rose I witnessed a very curious phenomenon.[1] A number of light-rays converged upon a point of the horizon exactly opposite the sun almost as though the sun were setting instead of rising. As the steamers came from Barbados and Trinidad I could hear their paddles distinctly when they were a long way off—the Trinidad one when it was more than five miles away.

September 14th.—A letter from Mrs. Frank Stonor tells me that Lord Carnarvon has said very pleasant things about me to her sister-in-law. I hope that this may mean something.

September 21st.—Witnessed to-day a startling accident. Riding round Fort Charlotte with McHugh, we passed an angle of the wall where a very narrow bridle-path hugs it closely, the other side being a long slope at an angle of forty-five degrees. McHugh's horse shied, and in an instant fell over the bank and lay still about twenty feet from the top. McHugh was thrown some twenty-five feet further, but got up apparently little the worse after a momentary dizziness had gone off. Galloping off to get assistance, I found, on my return five minutes afterwards, that the horse was already stone-dead, the shock having apparently broken some internal blood-vessel. McHugh's escape was marvellous.

September 22nd. — My fortieth birthday and an auspiciously fine day to welcome me into middle age.

[1] Years afterwards I witnessed more than once a similar phenomenon in the island of Ovalau, Fiji. When the sun, though not actually set, had become invisible behind the mountains at the back, there was a similar convergence of rays to a point in the sea horizon, which was, as nearly as I could judge, exactly opposite the position of the sun.

September 25th.—To-day bitten by a centipede—the second time within the month. Quickly taking off coat and waistcoat, I found the creature on my arm. Though it was only four inches long and had operated through shirt and gauze undershirt, the pain caused was severe. The bite of a large one—eight inches long—such as I once saw on a lady in Demerara, must mean agony.

October 16th.—Here is a specimen of the local character. A leading planter to-day offered 10,000 tons of canes to the factory at 18*s.*, saying that he would give out the price as 15*s.*, the highest given to others!

October 17th.—At dinner to-day, among others, was a young fellow who I am rather inclined to like, as he reads and thinks about subjects very foreign to the ordinary colonial mind. Now, however, he told me confidentially that he had been a pessimist, but since he had come to St. Lucia he had turned optimist. Fancy this place, of all others, as the cause of such a change! I felt tempted to say, "You *were* a great donkey, and now you are a greater."

October 23rd.—The Archbishop of Port de Spain, accompanied by his local Vicaire Forain, called at my office, but was unable to come to dine on the Morne owing to inability to ride. Heard by telegram to-day of the reported capture of Nana Sahib. I should not be surprised if the maudlin sentimentality of the day were to save him from getting his deserts. The number of people appears to be continually increasing in England who reserve all their sympathy for criminals and have little or no regard for the sufferers from crime or for the interests of society.

October 24th.—Returning the Archbishop's call to-day, I had a long talk with him. Though a hopelessly intolerant priest, I have respect for him as practising in his life the severe austerity which he preaches. He complained of disproportionate endowment in the case of both the Roman Catholic clergy and their schools. On the former point he had more ground for complaint even than I had previously imagined. I told him, however, that while any

representation of his would be carefully considered, I feared that the question having been so recently settled at home was not likely to be reopened. As regards schools there is really no substantial injustice. For the Mico schools, principally supported by an English charity, because of the superior education afforded, have nine-tenths of their pupils Catholics, though they are under Protestant Government. I could not put forward this justification for fear of a renewal of persecution against the parents who prefer the Mico schools. I told him, however, I hoped to be able shortly to take up the general question of education, when he would have the opportunity of expressing his views, and that these would, of course, be given due weight. At the same time, I promised that I would endeavour to induce the Mico trustees to forego the reading of the Bible to Catholic children, and if they refuse consent, it would become a question whether all Government subsidy should not be withdrawn from them and schools established directly under Government. Though my views and those of Romanists are as the poles asunder, I agree with them as to the baneful effect of permitting the Bible to be read in entirety, "without note or comment."

October 28th.—Under much pressure made an exception to-day to my rule against dining out, for fear the Archbishop being unable to dine with me, my persistent refusal to meet him might be misconstrued. The conversation, notwithstanding my efforts to the contrary, was directed to somewhat embarrassing subjects—Tyndall's address to the British Association and the recently published *Supernatural Religion.* This book the Archbishop said he should read, though one argument against it was sufficient for him—he had actually seen a miracle! He is a native of Mauritius, and at the end I made him laugh heartily with an old story of Theodore Hook, which he had never heard.[1]

[1] Hook was Treasurer of Mauritius, and his accounts being found in great confusion, he had to leave the Service. Being asked why he had returned home, he replied, "Something wrong in the chest!" The Government Treasury is in some colonies termed "The Chest."

November 1st.—Rode down to the factory and there embarked in a small coasting steamer which had come to Cul-de-sac for the purpose. Our destination was Soufrière but we landed at several points on the way to inspect cultivation for the factory and the fitness of the various sea-fronts for the erection of jetties. The village of Anse-le-raye being in front of one of the contributory estates, I walked through it for the purpose of examining a swamp which is said to render the place unhealthy. The drainage would be neither difficult nor very expensive, but the question of funds is the real trouble.

At Canaries the people, recognising my being on board by the Union Jack, greeted me with much loud shouting and firing of guns, many running a long way along the beach until the steamer outstripped them. These people have never forgotten a service I rendered them three years ago when I saved their village from extinction.

The amphitheatre of hills, at the foot of which nestles in a hollow the little town of Soufrière, looked even more lovely than usual, the cane-cultivation, always beautiful at a distance, being now especially so, owing to the plants being in blossom. Inspected the district hospital, for which I obtained a vote before leaving last year and which has been since erected. The building is decidedly a better one than I had expected for the money. Talked to the patients, and looked into the various arrangements. These are not as good as I should like, but probably the best which the funds permit of. Passing Canaries on our return in the dim twilight, a blaze of lights appeared all along the beach, and a firing began which indicated that every gun in the neighbourhood which would hold powder had been brought into requisition, the people having this time had more time for preparation. Unfortunately want of light prevented them from seeing me, or I them, so I could not acknowledge their greeting. Rode up the Morne in pitch darkness, the horses finding the way, which is more than I could have done.

November 7th.—Weather strangely sultry for the time of

year. The hurricane season seems to be gradually extending its limits. It was supposed to end on the 26th October, until a few years ago, when the great St. Thomas hurricane occurred on the 28th. Now the telegraph reports one at Jamaica on November 1st.

November 10th.—Wrote to Lord Dufferin asking him to procure for me two large paper copies of the Canadian Code, which I find are all in the hands of the Canadian Government. By-the-by, Lord Dufferin's recent speech at Toronto realises my ideal of what a Governor General's language ought to be. It will have an effect far beyond Canada, and will help to raise the pride and sense of empire which the unwise utterances of English vestry politicians have been tending to destroy.

November 12th.—The skin of a rat-tail snake has just been found in my cellar, its freshness showing that it has been shed within a day or two. I thought I caught sight of one in the garden yesterday, though by the time I could reach the place it had disappeared.

November 19th.—It accidentally became known to me to-day that for the last twenty years the papers of notaries who have died, instead of being deposited at the Registry, as they should have been, have been sold to other notaries, who (as in the case before me now) actually refuse to people a sight of the deeds of their own properties.

November 21st.—Most reluctantly obliged to issue a proclamation to-day stopping any further payment this year for serpents' heads, the amount expended having already much exceeded the vote for the purpose. The number brought in this year must be nearly approaching twenty thousand.

November 23rd.—Private letter to-day from Lord Carnarvon. Very kind, though disappointing. In reply to my application for Barbados, which is the only government I could accept just now without deserting the factory at a critical time, he says: "I doubt whether this would be consistent with my arrangements which I have in view,

but you may be sure I will not forget or overlook your work." I subsequently heard that Mr. Pope Hennessey had already been nominated.

November 27th.—The Royal Mail Company wants a subsidy from us for a contemplated direct line to New York. Our funds are not yet in a condition to warrant such expenditure, and, moreover, I should much prefer assistance towards a direct communication with Canada, which the Guiana Government has in contemplation.

The inspector of the Mico schools told me to-day that the Roman Catholic curé had actually asked him to inspect the Roman Catholic schools. This looks as if the priests are coming round to reason, and the chances of harmony are further increased by the fact that the Mico trustees have acceded to my request for the adoption of a conscience clause.

November 29th.—This evening there came up the hill two little Italian boys—one with a harp and the other with a violin. Their music was not of the best, but nevertheless affected me deeply, being the first of any kind—except the distant notes of an out-of-tune piano—which I have heard since I left England.

December 2nd.—A kind letter from the Duchess of Abercorn, telling me that the Duke had been interesting himself in my favour. Lord Carnarvon had replied to him that my official work had given him much satisfaction, and that he would have much pleasure in promoting me when opportunity offered. She writes in very low spirits, alluding to Lady Mount Edgcumbe's death. The Directors of the Factory Company have sent me a resolution of thanks for my work, so the news altogether affords some little compensation for the thought that I shall probably have to remain here at least two more years.

December 5th.—In working to-day at an ordinance for consolidating the laws respecting offences within the jurisdiction of magistrates, I find some curious anomalies. For instance, if a man steals a fowl he may be dealt with by a

magistrate, but if he takes an egg he must go before a higher court and have the benefit of a jury.

December 12th.—Mr. and Mrs. Quintin Hogg arrived on their way from Demerara to England. It was threatening rain, so she did not come up the Morne. He and I rode together into the Cul-de-sac for inspection of the factory works. He expressed himself as much impressed with our prospects, and said there would be now no difficulty in disposing of the four hundred shares of the company which remain to be "placed." This is encouraging as coming from a large owner of sugar estates, who has had much experience. Went down and paid a visit to Mrs. Hogg on the steamer. She says she is very sorry to leave the West Indies, and would like to live in Demerara altogether—odd taste, but in view of her husband's large interest there and other considerations, not unintelligible. I parted with the Hoggs with much regret.

December 17th.—Visited the new lunatic asylum to-day. One of the patients spends his time in drawing all over the walls of his room, with burnt cork, the most extraordinary pictures, closely resembling those of ancient Egypt and Assyria. If he has never seen such a book as that of Layard, the character of his work would seem to imply some mental reversion to a far-off Oriental ancestor. In any case, it is remarkable, and as he is at times very dangerous, he is allowed to occupy his time in this way as much as he likes.

December 18th.—Natal is vacant by now, and but for the factory, which ties me to this part of the world, I should have applied for it. What a heavy penalty I have to pay whenever I get outside of the ordinary groove, and how many temptations there are, as Arthur Gordon recently wrote, to do nothing but keep things quiet!

December 23rd.—*The Times* of the 5th announces the appointment of Arthur Gordon to Fiji. It is a particularly good one, for he is specially fitted for the work before him there. I envy him the chance of making a new colony

"off his own bat" under entirely unprecedented conditions. I was also glad to see in *The Times* an appreciative notice of him, which will be a consolation after all the abuse he has experienced from interested people whose "little games" he has thwarted.

December 24th.—I fear that a telegram I sent direct to the Secretary of State some days ago will increase my unpopularity at the Colonial Office. More than three months since I sent home the estimates for 1875 as based on my new scheme of finance. As the introduction of this scheme involves much legislative and administrative work, and will cause many changes in the revenue and the accounts, it is of very great importance that I should have a decision before the end of the year, or much labour of one kind or another will in any case be thrown away.

December 25th.—To-day the reply received from the Colonial Office is, "Financial proposals partially approved. Despatch mail." This does not tell me what is approved and what disapproved, and I am no wiser than before. The despatch cannot arrive until the end of January, so we must begin the New Year on the old tariff.

Yesterday evening the nuns of the convent sent me for a Christmas present a smoking-cap with beautiful embroidery on violet velvet. I could never use such a head-covering, but nevertheless appreciate their kindness. Had, according to my usual custom, asked to dinner a number of men who are living apart from their families, including the Chief Justice; but as owing to illness I had been obliged to delay the invitations, they were all engaged. I cannot say I was sorry; and, dining alone, I had, for some not altogether intelligible reason, one of the happiest Christmases for years.

December 27th.—This week it is just eleven years since I arrived in the West Indies and entered Her Majesty's Service, and yet after all my work I am pecuniarily worse off. Yet with many enemies I have made some warm friends. I have survived without, I hope, permanent damage to

health, and, above all, I have one prospect which compensates fully for all actual ills.

January 2nd, 1875.—The Duke of Wellington has sent me some more ramie seeds, the first lot having failed to come up. If some means were invented, as will assuredly be the case some day, for cheaply cleaning the splendid fibre of this plant, its successful cultivation here might be of great benefit to the West Indies. I carried some of the seed to Dix, who manages to coax vegetation in a manner quite beyond me.

January 3rd.—A conversation with one of the new doctors has confirmed me in the opinion that much poisoning goes on here without detection. We could not afford to pay a competent analytical chemist, and it has occurred to me to propose the appointment of one for the whole of the Windward Islands, each contributing to the cost proportionately to its revenue. Such an officer would be most useful, not only for convicting poisoners, but for detecting adulteration in manures, drugs, and food. Considering what a number of poisons are known to the negroes and the impossibility of detection, it is wonderful that murder in this way is not more common than it is.

January 5th.—Attended the funeral of Mr. Drysdale, formerly Administrator of this colony, who has been for some time residing here with his family. In extreme old age he was converted to Romanism, and was to have been baptised when the Archbishop was last here. When it came to the point, however, he refused, and the ceremony was, in fact, performed only when he was *in extremis*.

January 6th.—My work on the codes to-day was that of incorporating with that of procedure, and inserting in the right places, some of the "Rules of Court" which have recently been made by the English judges. They embody a large concession to common sense, but the wording of some of them is, to say the least, careless. Perhaps they will be in force in St. Lucia before coming into general operation in England.

January 15th.—Dix came in to-day with the report that the Treasury is specially flourishing, so that anxiety caused by the remissness to send out a decision on the estimates is to a certain extent removed. It is believed that the sugar crop of this year will reach 12,000 hogsheads, the largest ever made, and 2,000 more than in the best year of slavery.

CHAPTER IX

Visit of French frigate—Financial proposals approved—Earthquakes—Discussion with clergyman—Difficulties of Interpretation Chapter for Civil Code—Cat and parrot—Visit of Governor Rawson—Anticipates failure of Hennessey as his successor—Inspect new lunatic asylum—Earthquake—*Supernatural Religion*—Long meeting of Council—Pass financial measures and twelve ordinances—Completion of Civil Code—Rawson's appreciation of my work, with Lord Carnarvon's favourable comment—Visit of Gordon Duffs—Suffer from sunstroke—Ordered to England—Illness on voyage.

JANUARY 25th.—Received a telegram from Rawson to-day, in which he makes a similar mistake to that of the Colonial Office. He says: "Estimates approved, and also all financial proposals, except one." As he does not tell me what the exception is, I cannot even yet get to work, as something might be disallowed which would render the whole scheme impossible.

January 26th.—A French frigate came in to-day, and the captain came up to call, accompanied by the French consul.

January 27th.—To-day returned the French captain's call. Foreigners regard an English civilian's uniform to be quite as much his proper dress as is that of a soldier or a sailor, and to call in plain clothes is considered discourtesy. So for the first time since I came here I put on official clothes. The sight was so unusual that a great mob collected, and there was much hurrahing as I went off to the ship. Though I had specially requested the captain not to salute owing to our inability to return it, he nevertheless did so, no doubt with the most friendly intention, but much to my annoyance. Up to last year salutes used to be fired from Fort Charlotte, and since the removal of the troops, by the police. But the training of the police for this purpose was a great waste of time, and as they never attained

proficiency, they were specially liable to accidents. As, moreover, salutes cannot be expected where there are no troops, I had forbidden them for the future.

In the evening the French captain and some of his officers dined with me. The dinner, at which were also several colonists, went off well; and the French officers (who, by-the-by, seemed to be all Orleanist) left with much effusion of complimentary speeches. Despatch from Rawson arrived by schooner to-day, embodying Lord Carnarvon's decision about my financial proposals—just about two months after it might and ought to have been here. All my proposals are approved, including abolition of the export duties. Nothing is disapproved, and there is only a mere suggestion, not an order, that I should decrease the duty on flour and add proportionately to that on spirits. Had the official telegram of December been, "All approved except high duty on flour," I might before this have at least had all ready for Council. As it is I can begin only now, and there must be still further delay and loss of revenue. I must also either repay many small sums already paid in taxes which are to be abolished, or postpone the introduction of the new scheme until the next financial year. The omission is not the fault of Lord Carnarvon, but is simply due to unimaginative carelessness on the part of some of his subordinates.

February 1st.—Mr. Semper, the English clergyman, whom I like, came to breakfast. We discussed, among other subjects, the arguments for and against miracles and Dr. Lightfoot's reply to the author of *Supernatural Religion.* I was in disagreement with my guest in thinking this attack to be written in a tone not at all likely to advance its cause among the unprejudiced. I wish Semper lived nearer here. He is a really good man, and he has education enough to permit our broaching subjects which for various reasons I can hardly touch upon with anyone else. Drafted a law this morning to legalise life assurance. The French law, which is still in force, regards it as immoral!

February 8th.—At a dance the other night in Castries I am told there were fifty women—all white, or supposed to be so. There is another to-night. I am again invited, but shall not go. Apart from its Governor, St. Lucia is getting quite gay. The servants have all gone to look on at the dancing, and I am left alone in the house to face the ghosts of several generations of soldiers who have died here, and who, the negroes believe, parade the galleries at night.

* * * * * *

My cat and Demerara parrot are the constant companions of my solitude, and give me a pleasure which no one in ordinary circumstances could appreciate.

February 15th.—At nine this morning a man-of-war was signalled to leeward, and in an hour the *Argus* came in with Rawson on board. At noon he, his private secretary, and the captain came up, the latter staying to luncheon, and then going off in his ship to join the admiral. Rawson (who remained as my guest) wishing to be quiet to-day, I had with him the first game at billiards, I think, which I have played for six months.

February 20th.—Rawson left two days ago. During his stay he, after reading my private letter to Lord Carnarvon and his reply, remarked, "You have said nothing that you were not fully entitled to say, and there is much more which you might justly have said." Of the reply he said, "After this you may expect something good before long." I confess I cannot see how this is possible, as any other promotion but Barbados would mean abandonment of the central factory, which I fear is out of the question at present. Rawson was in a very confidential humour, and told me that Lord Carnarvon had plainly intimated to him that he was unable to offer him further employment. He said he feared he had been too long in subordinate positions to make a satisfactory chief. Rawson's principal defect is fear of responsibility, but this he has in common with several special favourites of the Colonial Office; and he is

at least a gentleman, which is for governors evidently not a *sine quâ non.* And so as Rawson, despite his age, is still in robust health, I think he might in preference to others be given renewed employment. His judgment about one thing is, I feel sure, correct. He says the appointment of Hennessey to Barbados for the purpose of carrying Confederation is a serious mistake. He is a Roman Catholic, and the Barbadians are more fanatically Protestant even than the Scotch.

One day Rawson and I rode down to the factory site. Some two hundred people were actively engaged on various occupations, and these, with three tramways carrying material, a steam-crushing machine crushing ballast, and a pumping engine in full play, created a busy scene not often seen in the West Indies. Afterwards we went to the lunatic asylum. It is only a short distance by water across the harbour, but I preferred to ride round by land in order that the visit might not be expected; for the sight of our boat would have let the cat out of the bag. Rawson was much pleased with his visit, and with the great improvement which has taken place since his last inspection in the condition and treatment of the lunatics.

Asked Dix and Clavier, the Registrar, to meet Rawson at dinner, the latter, who is one of my best public officers, in order to show that I make no distinction in respect of "colour," and partly for the benefit of the "whites," who, though he is about the best-educated man in the island, recently passed a marked slight upon him.

The last quarter of an hour before the departure of the steamer Rawson made me talk to him, and our parting at the termination of our six years of official connection was of the warmest.

February 21st.—On Friday morning at about three o'clock I was awoke by an earthquake. It felt as if my bed had been suddenly converted into a sieve and I was being sifted. Various things in the room rattled unpleasantly. The tremor, however, quickly came to an end, and I have

become so used to the sensation that I quickly went to sleep again. Being worn out with work, I to-day read the second volume of *Supernatural Religion*, which I have dropped for some time. The argument to prove that the gospels in their present form were unknown to any of the earliest Christian writers, even far into the second century, appears conclusive. But a far more powerful one against inspiration exists in the discrepancies and actual contradictions in the several accounts, such as neither Paley nor anyone else has explained satisfactorily to any mind not predetermined to be convinced. Moreover, miraculous inspiration is to me scarcely conceivable without miraculous preservation. Every day's experience makes me more thankful for the instinct—I can hardly call it conviction—which made repellent to me the prospect of becoming a clergyman, and caused me by preference to exile myself in the Colonies.

February 23rd.—In the evening read Lecky's recent book, which tells far more than I knew before of the horrible enormities committed in the name of religion by Protestants as well as Catholics. I had previously no conception of the abominable cruelties practised by Scotch Presbyterians against religious opponents, or the refinements of torture perpetrated upon thousands of helpless old women. I have often observed, even in modern life, that the superlative reverence for every word of the Bible operates to produce cruelty in a certain class of mind. Indeed, what else can be expected of people who, so long as they can save their own souls, contemplate with equanimity the eternal torture of by far the greater part of humanity? I have been told by those who hold strongly to this doctrine[1] of future

[1] The following is a curious instance of the profession of this doctrine. A foreign Protestant princess recently told me this story of what happened to herself, she being, it may be remarked, of a peculiarly amiable disposition and with a character beyond reproach. When lately saying "Good-bye" to a Roman Catholic, an old and intimate friend of very advanced age, she expressed a hope that they might meet again in the spring, if not, in the next world, to which the reply with regard to the latter alternative was, "Hélas! malheureusement non; nous partons par des routes différentes!" Having the

punishment for disbelief in their peculiar creed, that they were happier than I am. Possibly, but I would prefer to be without this form of happiness.

March 4th.—In consequence of a telegram from Rawson telling me that the Gordon Duffs were on board the steamer on their way to Trinidad, I rode down early to see them. I cannot tell how glad I was to see again a face connected with "the other side of the water," and especially a great friend of M. as well as myself. The bride looked well after her voyage, her face and manner as sweet as ever. She told me that her sister Charlotte[1] had suspected my "engagement," and I was compelled by silence to admit it. Before leaving, the Duffs agreed to come and stay with me on their return from Trinidad.

March 8th.—Council to-day. Three members are against my financial scheme, the other unofficials doubtful. A petition against it came in to-day. There were a considerable number of signatures, including, I think, every clerk in the employ of the three principal mercantile firms. A more illiterate and foolish production probably never issued from the leading members of a community. The purely mercantile members denied at the Board that they intended any reflection on me, though its prayer is against my "arbitrary, oppressive, and unconstitutional measures"; and Mr. John Goodman, another member, who is chiefly planter, was indignant that the name of his firm had without his knowledge been attached to it. Knowing the people as I

privilege of the friendship of the old lady in question, and knowing her to abound in excellent and amiable qualities, which render her always genial and happy, I can only imagine that her instinct really rejects the doctrine which she is bound to profess. I may mention with regard to this lady that she is an extraordinary instance of the retention of all the faculties in extreme old age. She was presented to Louis XVIII. and danced with Charles X., and being now, I believe, 98 years old, still receives visitors every evening, and at her not infrequent dinner-parties (as we ourselves saw five years ago) keeps up the fashion of our fathers by carving, and carving well, the *pièce de résistance*, taking at the same time a lively part in the conversation, which she frequently enriches from her memory and experience.

[1] Now Lady Ribblesdale.

do, I ought not to be disturbed by the language of this petition, though it comes from those for whom I have been slaving for five years, and to whom my work has brought a prosperity they have never known before.

March 11th.—The meeting of Council came to an end to-day after four days' sitting. Twelve ordinances (one of them having sixty clauses) were passed through all their stages, first, second, and third readings, with committee, each involving a speech from me on introduction, a reply to opposition on second reading, and much talking in committee. Altogether in the four days I was speaking for sixteen hours. On the last day I replied to all the objections to my financial scheme, having previously made known that in consideration of what had been urged, I would retain the tonnage dues and diminish the proposed import duties on certain articles. I had the satisfaction of hearing afterwards that my speech had changed one vote in my favour. With this addition there were three unofficials on my side and three against, so that with the official vote my budget, as amended, was carried by seven to three.

March 12th.—Rode down early to the factory with Mr. Chapman, and on my return felt quite worn out. What with the Code (to finish which I have been working at high pressure), the factory, the meeting of Council, and ordinary routine, I must have been at my desk during the last month more than twelve hours a day on the average.

I learn from the official records that on leaving me after his visit above described, Sir Rawson Rawson, in the course of a highly complimentary report to Lord Carnarvon, said: "Mr. Des Vœux has completed the two codes of law (Civil Law and Civil Procedure) founded on the law of Canada on which he has been for a considerable time engaged."[1]

[1] This was practically, though not absolutely correct. I had completed the Civil Code, but as regards the Code of Procedure, I had not made the final revision which I considered necessary, though I believe that, as eventually passed, it contained little, if any, alteration from my draft.

In concluding the same report, Rawson said: "It is but just to Mr. Des Vœux that I should avail myself of this, perhaps the last, occasion of testifying to his untiring energy and industry, and to his great desire to improve the condition of the people committed to his charge." In reply to this and other despatches of a similar character, Lord Carnarvon, then Secretary of State, gave me for the first time that substantial encouragement which I was perhaps presumptuous in thinking I had deserved three years before: "It gives me much satisfaction to learn that the colony is so prosperous, and I agree with you that this result is due in no small measure to the energy and industry of Mr. Des Vœux."

A few days after the last date recorded in my journal the Gordon Duffs stayed with me for some days. She was the daughter of Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles) Tennant, and had only very recently been married to Mr. Thomas Gordon Duff, the eldest son of Mr. Gordon Duff, of Drummuir. Their visit caused me very great pleasure, but came too late to save me, by the distraction thus caused, from the break-down which, fortunately for me, though unfortunately for them, occurred while they were in my house. When they arrived I was suffering severely from sleeplessness, caused probably by overwork, and so I gladly accompanied them on various expeditions, the particulars of which I have mostly forgotten. I was returning with them from a visit to Mr. John Goodman, who had hospitably entertained us at Vieuxfort, and we had ridden over the twelve miles of hill-country which separates it from Soufrière and come back to Castries by water. On riding home up the Morne, I felt more than ever before the glare of the setting sun as reflected from the sea. While dressing for dinner I suddenly lost consciousness, and the Duffs, hearing me fall, rushed into the room, where I was found in a state of complete collapse. Nothing could be kinder than the attention received from the Duffs, who, one or other of them, watched by my bedside during the one, two, or three nights, I forget

how many, during which I remained in the island. The doctors being of opinion that my only chance of recovery was to go home at once, I embarked in the mail steamer, the Duffs accompanying me as far as St. Thomas.

It was not expected either by the doctors or anyone in the island that I should live to reach home; but by the time the vessel reached St. Thomas I seemed so much better that I ventured to go ashore. The effort proved too great, and being taken ill again, I had to be carried on board the homeward-bound steamer.

The voyage home was very miserable. Owing to rough weather the screw was continually out of the water, causing on each occasion a vibration in my brain which almost entirely deprived me of sleep. Smoother water during the last few days gave me some relief, and I reached the hotel at Plymouth without much difficulty. But another attack there caused a doctor to be summoned, who led me to think that I was in serious danger. On that account I was the more anxious to get to London, and, despite the doctor's earnest dissuasion, started by the express next morning. The railway journey, strangely enough, affected me less than might have been expected, and I reached London none the worse for my hardihood.

CHAPTER X

My marriage—The Tennant family—Yester and Lord Tweeddale—Sir George Bowen and Sir John Pope Hennessey—Return to St. Lucia—Jealousy of parrot—Troubles with servants—An alarming incident—Stupidity of ants—Birth of son—Visited by Pope Hennessey—Estimate of him and his doings—Riot at Vieuxfort, and measures in consequence—Official appreciation—Obeah and its terrors—An Obeah child-murder—Take responsibility of ordering execution—Relief of people after event.

THE effects of the sun-stroke (or rather "light-stroke," as I believe this affection was termed by Sir Rutherford Alcock to distinguish it from heat apoplexy) did not vanish at once. Indeed, one effect, an extreme sensitiveness in facing light, whether natural or artificial, has never left me. Another was sufficiently curious to deserve mention. Being always fond of music, and then, owing to long deprivation, specially desirous of hearing it, I found that one, and only one, note of the piano had become intolerable. When that was struck, it set up a vibration in the brain, which if prolonged would have been maddening. I believe that when a tuning-fork is struck, any other within a short distance which is of exactly the same pitch will vibrate in unison,[1] and I can only presume that some fibre in the head had become attuned to the note in question.

But though by no means completely well, I was in the course of three months sufficiently recovered to be no longer regarded as an invalid; so that, other difficulties having been surmounted, there was nothing to interfere with my marriage. This event took place on the 24th July at St. James's Church, Piccadilly. After the ceremony, while the register was being signed, someone touched me

[1] This discovery is, I believe, the principle governing wireless telegraphy.

from behind, and a voice said in what was no doubt intended as a whisper, but which had rather the character of a stage aside, "Why don't you ask Lady Salisbury to sign?" Turning round, I recognised from his dress that the speaker was the verger, who, as I had never before been in the church, was entirely unknown to me. He had, it appeared, been for many years in the position, and so acquired the freedom of speech and manner common to old servants. But unaware of this, and being entirely unacquainted with Lady Salisbury, who I felt sure was not present, I suspected the fellow had gone mad, when a lady, who was close by and heard the verger's question, exclaimed, "I'm coming," and immediately went up to the table and signed. It was Lady Derby. Only then did it occur to me to whom the man had referred, and that having known her who had been Lady Salisbury, he was ignorant of, or owing to old age had forgotten, the fact of her remarriage.

After a wedding tour of three weeks we returned for a few days to Footscray Place, Mr. Pender's residence in Kent, and then went for a round of visits in Scotland. Among these was one of a week to the Glen, when we became even more alive than before to the attractiveness and cleverness of the girls of Mr. (now Sir Charles) Tennant's family. The younger ones, Laura and Margot (the late Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton and Mrs. Asquith), were at the time only about ten and eleven respectively, and yet they were contributing poems to the *Family Magazine*, which, I believe, appeared for some time periodically. I still possess one of the numbers which they gave me at the time, and the poems in it signed "L. T." and "M. T.", while evidently the productions of extreme youth, yet indicate an amazing precocity. What, however, was to my mind a far better test of their cleverness was displayed at the well-known game of "Twenty Questions." Their proficiency would have been almost beyond belief if I had not witnessed it. In several trials, which would have proved too difficult for most "grown-up" people, they were always

successful without exceeding the prescribed number of questions.

During our visit to the Glen I met with an accident, which lamed me for some weeks and much interrupted the progress of recovery. Playing a match at lawn tennis at King's Meadows with Miss Charlotte Tennant (now Lady Ribblesdale) for my partner, against Sir Robert Hay and his son, in making a rush for the ball in the deciding stroke of the game I felt what seemed to be the sharp blow of a stick upon the calf of my leg. In fact, however, no one had struck me, and I had broken one of the small tendons. Such severe pain ensued that, after vainly attempting to hop to the house, I was seized and carried thither. Being kindly cared for by Lady Hay and her family, I was able to return to the Glen the next day; but the accident did much to spoil our Scotch tour and precluded all shooting at Yester, where we went immediately afterwards.

Lord Tweeddale had aged considerably since my visit of two years before, and was much deafer. But nothing could exceed his kindness to us both, and our visit was wholly pleasant. The celebrated court-martial on the officers of the *Vanguard* was proceeding at the time, and Lord Tweeddale showed himself proud, as well he might, at the exceedingly able manner in which the proceedings were presided over by his son John (now Admiral of the Fleet).

Returning to Footscray Place and spending the final fortnight there, we left England for St. Lucia in September in the Royal Mail s.s. *Nile*—the fifth voyage made by me in the same vessel.

We found on board the *Nile* Sir John Pope Hennessey[1] (who was to be my new chief) and his wife, my Demerara friends Crosby and Perot, together with some of my former enemies of that colony. Hennessey, whatever objections there afterwards proved to be against official connection with him, showed himself on this voyage to be socially most

[1] Sir John Pope Hennessey, then recently appointed Governor of Barbados, and afterwards Governor of Hong Kong and Mauritius.

agreeable. I had met him previously at the Queen's birthday dinner given by Lord Carnarvon in Bruton Street, where Sir George Bowen was talking, according to his wont, in a somewhat loud voice. After a remark had fallen rather flat to the effect that he had had an interview on the same day with the Pope, Victor Emmanuel, and Garibaldi, he shortly afterwards said, apropos of nothing: "Very extraordinary thing, very extraordinary; I was asked to dine the same day with the Prime Minister and with the Archbishop of Canterbury." Upon which little Pope Hennessey, who was sitting on the opposite side of the table, said even louder: "A much more extraordinary thing has happened to me, Sir George," and when asked what, replied: "*I* have been asked to dine *neither* with the Prime Minister *nor* with the Archbishop of Canterbury!"

Hennessey had that peculiarly Irish faculty of giving a humorous complexion to every ordinary incident. Moreover, however rough the sea or high the temperature, he appeared to be always in good spirits, and was especially considerate to us. As an instance of his thoughtfulness, I remember that when a flying-fish came into the port of his cabin, he had it cooked for my wife, who had been unable to eat any solid food for several days. Altogether I could not have wished a pleasanter travelling companion, and in consequence I cherished the hope that our official relations would be equally satisfactory—a hope which the sequel proved to be not altogether justified. On the first day of real heat some of us were amused by one of the Demerara men, who, after imbibing with marked satisfaction several "swizzles" one after the other, remarked, with a sigh of pleasure, "What a blessing it is to have again a good healthy thirst!"

Parting with the Hennesseys and our other friends at Barbados, we the next day arrived at St. Lucia. There we were received with the usual demonstrations, none the less fervent in that for the first time for many years there was to be a lady resident at Government House.

During my absence Mr. Dix, who was administering the government, had caused some alterations to be made in the house, which made it more fitted for occupation by a lady. There was also some additional furniture which had at my instance been purchased for the colony without expense to it. In order to explain this, I may mention that some years before the Colonial Office had sanctioned the magnificent addition of £100 a year to the wretched salary of my office. Mr. Rawson, who was by no means extravagant in his ideas, and the members of the Legislature, who were even less inclined in this direction, had considered that an addition of £300 was the least which would meet the case. I myself did not care to accept the inadequate increase authorised, and so while for the sake of my successor obtaining the increased vote, had repaid the extra amount into the Treasury. But this course, while permitted, had been objected to by Downing Street; so I made the suggestion, which was approved, that the total amount repaid by me should be expended on additional furniture for Government House, on the understanding that it should belong to the colony and remain for the use of my successors.

The continual presence in the house of a sympathetic companion made now a vast difference in my life. First, I was relieved from household worries and management, and again, in social duties I had tactful and valuable assistance. As a consequence I came to take a calmer view of delinquencies and difficulties; and though my troubles were still great, I regarded them with comparative equanimity. My rides now were rarely or never solitary. We had a daily gallop round the Morne, where alone within many miles there was sufficient level ground, and in our longer excursions there was a continual pleasure in introducing to an appreciative companion the scenic beauties of the tropics.

Save in one quarter, my wife was greeted everywhere with effusive warmth (a warmth which, as in every other

colony, increased as she became known). My old Demerara parrot Jocko, which Mr. Dix had cared for during my absence, seized with a fit of extraordinary jealousy, rushed at her in the most aggressive way whenever she appeared. Indeed, it was some weeks before in her presence he was restored to his former tranquillity.

Nor was this the only domestic "difficulty" which met my wife at the outset. My servant Sam, who had been with me twice to England, deliberately assumed on the voyage an attitude of unprecedented insolence, and I was compelled to discharge him at his native Barbados, evidently his secret object.

We afterwards discovered many reasons for Sam's fear of remaining with us, his doings having been such as my wife would have been sure to discover, though to me, occupied as I was with other business, they had remained "a sealed book." Without entering into these peccadilloes, I may mention an amusing trick which, according to the other servants, he had played upon me more than once. I distinctly remember that on one occasion, when I had been at my desk from early morning, asking the man: "Why have I not had my breakfast?" To this he replied, "Oh, sir, you had it two hours ago." This, though much surprised, I believed. It now appeared that having gauged my absence of mind in respect of anything except what I was engaged upon, he had purposely deceived me in order to save himself trouble. He had boasted of the trick to the other servants, but they, out of fear of him, had concealed the circumstance until he was gone. How many times I had thus been defrauded of my meals I shall not pretend to guess.

We thus arrived in St. Lucia accompanied by only two maids whom my wife had engaged from her mother's house. One of these, though for some years in a position of trust and never before having exhibited any such tendency, began almost immediately after our arrival in the tropics to show symptoms of inebriety. After bearing with her for

some time, we were reluctantly compelled to pay her passage back to England. Fortunately my wife quickly made herself beloved by the coloured servants, and the other English maid proved to be a treasure, so that these annoyances, which at first threatened to be serious, came to an end.

Not long after our arrival an incident occurred which would have seriously disturbed the equanimity of one with less courage than my wife. A plot of ground near the house had been used as the soldiers' cemetery when a garrison occupied the neighbouring fort, and was supposed to be much infested by snakes; I had therefore begged her not to go there. Her maid, however, went one day to inspect the tombstones and related to her what she had seen; and on my return home that evening my wife said, laughing, "I know now why you didn't want me to go near that cemetery. Lizzie saw there the tombstones of six governors and one governor's wife, who all died within one year."

Such was, indeed, the tragic fact. At the period in question the administration of the island was entrusted to the officer in command of the troops, and an epidemic of yellow fever had carried off within a single year, besides the wife of one of them, six officers who had successively taken charge of the government. If my wife was at all terrorised by this circumstance—and the event which occurred within a few months rendered this specially probable—she never permitted me to see it.

On one occasion we had the opportunity of observing a curious instance of the doings of ants. A legion of these insects was endeavouring to drag a large cockroach up a perpendicular wall in one of the galleries outside our house. They were very diminutive in size, and so, while succeeding again and again in taking the load six or eight inches upwards, its weight always then proved too great for them, and it was allowed to drop. With extraordinary perseverance this operation was repeated during nearly the whole of two days, and as far as we were able to observe, during

also the intervening night, always with the same unsuccessful result, until the whole had been torn to pieces and carried off piecemeal. During nearly the whole of this proceeding there were many ants running over the back of the cockroach, thus adding largely to its weight; and there was thus illustrated the fact, humorously noticed by my friend Mark Twain in one of his books, that a curious stupidity is mingled with the extraordinary intelligence which ants appear to exhibit in other respects. For these ants were all of the same small variety, and evidently belonged to the same nest, so there was no attempt, as I have seen in other cases, to drag the object in different directions.

On June 4th, 1876, occurred the birth of our eldest child. The usual anxieties connected with such an event were aggravated by circumstances. One of the least of them was that the coloured nurse, the best at our disposal, proved to be utterly incompetent, to say the least. When no one was at hand to prevent her, she forced what she called "a gill" of new rum down the throat of the unfortunate infant within a few hours of its birth, insisting that it was the customary and proper thing to do! Possibly the *dura ilia* of negro children may be able to withstand such a dose, but neither I nor our angry doctor could imagine those of an English baby being able to do so with impunity. I ascribe largely to this act the ill-health with which the child was long affected. The woman being at once discharged, my wife's young maid proved equal to the occasion, though utterly without previous experience, and successfully carried the child through this trying period. At the same time she proved to be a devoted nurse to my wife, who remained seriously ill for more than two months, and has never since completely recovered.

From the first my wife had to undergo many ordeals of a nature to which she, in the course of years, became well accustomed, but which, at a time when she was utterly without experience, would have been very trying to anyone less endowed with common sense and readiness of verbal

resource. But though she could never be "drawn" for information and declined listening to gossip, her sympathetic attitude towards all who approached her, to whatever class they belonged, her kindly greeting, with something pleasant to say to all her guests, and the patience with which she listened to grievance-mongers, never failed to conciliate, and gained for her, according to abundant evidence, a general, I may almost say, a universal affection. And more than this, by mitigating disappointments, soothing asperities, and sending away pleased with themselves people inclined to be malcontents, she proved to be a most efficient aid in administration.

In December, 1875, Pope Hennessey paid his first, and I think his only, visit to St. Lucia, when he was duly sworn in before the Executive Council as Governor-in-Chief. During the presence of the Governor-in-Chief the office of Administrator became temporarily suspended, its occupant ceasing to be responsible for administration and becoming merely Colonial Secretary without even a seat in the Executive Council. Hennessey showed himself in the house, as on board ship, most agreeable socially. As regards public affairs, he touched only very lightly upon the local politics, confining himself for the most part to complimentary speeches. Yet he was very full of his project of Confederation and the Barbadian attitude towards it, and spoke to me with singular frankness of his plan of action, based on the principle of "Flectere si nequeo Superos, Acheronta movebo" ("If I cannot bend the whites, I shall stir up the blacks!"). In fact, he evinced a somewhat rash confidence in the discretion of one whom he knew so slightly. For had I been otherwise than absolutely loyal to my guest, or disclosed what was said to me on this occasion, the position which his extraordinary policy produced in the following year would have been even more critical for him. Though in his projects and acts Hennessey showed an unscrupulousness, which he sometimes avowed in a manner indicating either unconsciousness or cynicism, and though official con-

nection with him proved to be far from altogether agreeable, yet from the first I was compelled to admire his moral courage and sympathy with the oppressed. These qualities, together with his humorous cheeriness, prevented me from ever really disliking him, and I thus came to regard with comparative equanimity doings which, to say the least, were not worthy of commendation. A sample of these took place in this visit to me.

At this time much of the contents of my Civil Code, which had been finally copied out from my draft during my absence in England, had become known, and some of its provisions, especially with regard to civil marriage, to marriage *in extremis*, and to bequests made by persons within a year of death, had created strong feeling among the Roman Catholics, which, needless to say, was being fomented by the priests. Hennessey, though well aware of this, attended a breakfast given to a large number of guests, exclusively Roman Catholic, which was given by the Curé of Castries, and to which I was not invited. Whether the report was true or not to the effect that the conversation on that occasion was largely directed to politics, it is certain that after it Hennessey was looked upon as a sure opponent of the Code, at least as regards these obnoxious provisions. And this confidence was proved by the event to be fully justified.

This was not the only disagreeable occurrence of the day in question. After the breakfast Hennessey went to pay a visit of inspection to the gaol. He expressed himself as much satisfied with its condition, and added that he would like to mark the occasion of his visit by granting a free pardon to one of the prisoners whom the gaoler might recommend. The gaoler thereupon brought forward the one whom he favoured, and the man was at once allowed to go free. This proceeding and its effect in the way of inconvenience and embarrassment may be gathered when I mention, that this gaoler was a very inefficient officer, the reports against whom, both by the late and the exist-

ing head of his department, made me doubtful whether I ought not to move for his dismissal. If I had held my hand, it was because his long service would soon enable me to bring about his retirement on account of age, and because in view of the daily visit to the gaol on the part of his superior officer, his shortcomings could do little harm. This superior officer was Mr. Gall, the Chief of Police, whose office I had recently amalgamated for the sake of economy with those of Provost Marshal and Town Warden, and to him was entirely due, and not to his subordinate gaoler who merely carried out his orders, the credit for the satisfactory condition of the gaol. As the gaoler was a Roman Catholic and his chief was a Protestant, Hennessey's action in this matter, impelled by a careless inadvertence, was unfortunately ascribed by the public to a determination to snub the Protestants all round, myself included.

This was not the only point in which Hennessey's proceeding was open to exception. The prisoner released, as is often the case with the worst criminals, had recommended himself to the gaoler, who was really nothing more than a kind of head turnkey, by special obsequiousness. He was, however, of all the occupants of the gaol the very last who should have been pardoned. He had recently been found guilty of maliciously setting fire to a cane field, a crime of which, though very common and liable to be ruinous to the sufferers, no one had been convicted before. This form of incendiarism had become a common means of revenge against a proprietor who had caused offence; and not only was its perpetration liable to cause ruin to him and his neighbours, but its detection was extremely difficult. Accordingly this release caused a general and justifiable indignation when it became known among the planting body of St. Lucia.

I freely confess I was relieved when Hennessey left the island, which he did within a week of his arrival. Though I expressed my views on these matters with as much warmth as was possible to a guest in my house, I am bound to say

that he took them in such good part that I did not make them a matter of official difference, and we parted on excellent terms. In order to retain this happy condition I kept back until I was finally quitting the island the introduction of the Civil Code to the Council, wherein, as I will show, we seriously differed; otherwise I had no cause to complain of anything in our official connection. He approved of all my proceedings, and indeed on one or two occasions honoured me and them with a somewhat extravagant laudation.

In April, 1876, occurred an incident which caused some temporary anxiety, though its importance was unduly magnified by a telegraphic report which reached the neighbouring islands. A riot occurred at Vieuxfort, occasioning much destruction of property. Rumours were prevalent—a common occurrence in such cases—that this was only a prelude to a general rising of the negroes. The local magistrate having asked urgently for assistance, I sent to him a small force of police with extra rifles for special constables, giving him instructions at the same time as to the means of soothing an excited people, and cautioning him not to fire even blank cartridges except in the face of a very urgent necessity. He was also to let me know by special messenger if more aid should be required. Though I did not believe the rumours of general disaffection, they were so persistently brought to me by terrified people that I deemed it well to take precautions, and made all preparations to proceed myself with the rest of the police in the improbable event of their being required. When, however, I received by special messenger an offer from my old friends the villagers of Canaries to the effect that they would volunteer to a man in support of order, I became certain that the disturbance was only local and would not spread. And this turned out to be the case. The cause of trouble proved to be some petty sectarian quarrel. The rioting ceased on the appearance of the police, and the ringleaders were arrested and eventually punished.

On receiving my report of this affair Hennessey sent me a despatch containing the following passage: "A somewhat exaggerated telegram had been communicated to me on the subject at the time; but it caused me no apprehension, as I had sufficient confidence in your thorough knowledge of the people and your sound judgment in dealing with any such emergency. The prompt action which led to the rapid termination of the disturbance and the cessation of all anxiety is most creditable to your Government, and I can well understand how gratifying to you personally, as well as officially, must have been the loyalty and gratitude of the inhabitants of Canaries, who are evidently sensible of the special benefit your Honour's administration had been to them." Hennessey also wrote to Lord Carnarvon what drew from him the following acknowledgment: "Mr. Des Vœux appears to have acted with promptitude and good judgment in the measures he adopted for preventing further and more serious riot." This language, though justified by Hennessey's report, was much more than the occasion deserved.

In the account of my life in Guiana I have referred to that product of African superstition which in the British West Indies goes exclusively by the name of "Obeah."[1] The practices connected with this relic of savagery had not then, and probably have not now, entirely died out among the descendants of the slaves; and as they were apt to become rapidly more prevalent when ignored, it was necessary to repress them with the utmost severity, if it were only on account of the extreme terror which they caused to the ignorant. Early in my career in St. Lucia one of my servants came to me in a condition of the most abject fright, showing me at the same time a small image, intended to be in human form, with a pin stuck into it about the region of the heart. Persuasion by no means entirely succeeded in calming an excitement which was to

[1] "Obeah" is evidently much the same as the "Vaudoux" of Haiti, as described by Sir Spenser St. John.

a great extent shared by the other servants, none of whom were not quite sure that this warning might not have been intended for him or her.

Notwithstanding rumours to the contrary, I had up to this time been inclined to think that terror was the only evil caused by Obeah; but an event occurred early in 1876 which rudely undeceived me. One who had long been reputed to be a dangerous Obeahman was convicted before the Supreme Court on the clearest evidence of murdering a little child with the object of using the body for some of his abominable rites.[1] The principal witnesses against him were his own children, examined separately; and the body of the victim was mutilated in a peculiar way, which was sworn to be the method employed for Obeah purposes. It came out subsequently, when after the man's death people were no longer afraid to speak out, that this wretch, Adolphe la Croix by name, had previously disposed of one of his own children in the same horrible manner. Further, it appeared that it was in the immediate neighbourhood of this man's house that a child had disappeared, for the discovery of whom I had some years before offered a large reward without success.

When this case came before the Executive Council for decision as to the execution or remission of the sentence of death, I was placed in a position of some difficulty. During his stay with me Hennessey had mentioned his horror and disapproval of capital punishment, and at the same time desired me orally to forward to him, previously to any decision upon them, the papers connected with any trial terminating in a death sentence. Partly perhaps because of a knowledge of Hennessey's views on this point, but chiefly owing to a belief in the supreme power of Obeah, there was a general, indeed, an almost universal opinion, among whites as well as coloured, that death would

[1] The recent publication of some of the records of the "Chambre Ardente" shows that murderous rites of this kind were rife even in Europe up to the time of Louis XIV.

be commuted for imprisonment. I felt, on the other hand, that the man must die, or other Obeahmen would be encouraged to similar crimes, while the almost universal terror of them would be greatly aggravated, not to mention that fear of the particular man among his gaolers would in all probability conduce to his escape from imprisonment. Feeling at the same time sure that Hennessey, if he had the chance, would decide for commutation, and that the Executive Council, if they were made officially aware of Hennessey's oral instructions, would all vote in the same direction, I determined, as these had not been conveyed to me officially, to make no mention of them. Moved therefore by the evidence alone, and perhaps gathering from my very emphatically expressed views that I should probably overrule any decision contrary to them, the members voted unanimously that the sentence should be carried out. I had, indeed, quite made up my mind that it was my duty to have the man hanged, and only afterwards to make report of the case.

After it became known that the man was to pay the extreme penalty, various packages were sent to me, containing ridiculous images with pins sticking in them,[1] which, we were told, were intended to bring about my death. Then came an occurrence which clearly showed that my decision was a right one. During the whole night previous to the execution hundreds of people were marching round and round the fence enclosing the grounds of Government House, many remaining until, in the early morning, the news was brought that the man was actually dead. These people fully believed that either an attempt would be made on my life or that something else would occur to prevent the execution. When they heard the truth, however, they

[1] The belief that an image, made with the accompaniment of magical ceremonies to represent an obnoxious person, would cause that person to suffer any injury inflicted upon it is a very ancient African superstition. A papyrus record shows that the making of wax figures of this character formed part of the great conspiracy against Rameses III., who reigned in Egypt about 1300 B.C.

showed intense relief and satisfaction, which proved to be general throughout the island. Thus, though somewhat uncomfortable as to what might be the official view of the affair, I had compensation in the feeling that my action had added sensibly to the comfort of the people of the island. Hennessey never replied to my report on the subject. Perhaps he was at the time too much occupied with troubles nearer home. But I always congratulate myself that our official connection terminated shortly afterwards.

CHAPTER XI

Ordered home on public affairs—Disappointments caused by central factory —Its various difficulties—Loss to shareholders, but gain to colony—Civil Code in Legislative Council—Opposition to civil marriage instigated by Catholic hierarchy and supported by Pope Hennessey—Amusing legal objections—Priestly strong language—My action approved at home—Civil Code becomes law—Return to England.

IN July of this year (1876) I unexpectedly received a telegram from Lord Carnarvon instructing me to proceed to England as soon as public affairs permitted, for the purpose of conferring with the directors of the Factory Company. The affairs of the factory, which in previous years had given me so much trouble, cost me even more in 1875–6. At the outset of cane-crushing operations there were continually occurring disappointments. Much of the working could be seen from the south gallery of my house. With a powerful glass I was able to observe the locomotive drawing truckloads of canes—each containing two tons—to the factory. Then the contents of each truck would be hoisted *en masse* by a crane and dropped upon the "carrier," which, moving slowly by steam, fed them into the crushing mill. Knowing the importance attached to the continuous working of the machinery, I for many weeks together, while working at my desk on the Morne, was in the habit of going very frequently to the telescope to see what progress was being made. But though always in hope that at last the mill would work continuously for a whole day, I was ever doomed to be disappointed. Sometimes eleven or twelve truckloads would be steadily disposed of, but then would invariably come a stoppage. When this was prolonged I rode down to the factory to discover the cause,

which was usually either the disarrangement of some portion of the machinery or a failure in the cane-supply. The former cause was the more frequent in the early weeks, and the latter afterwards. I was told that breakdowns are common in the first year of work, even with the best crushing machinery; and for the sake of my peace of mind it was unfortunate that I had not been told this before. Yet as this particular machinery proved afterwards unexceptionable in construction, I cannot help thinking that the frequency of its stoppage from disarrangement indicated grave faults in erection or control.

Still more unexpected was the failure in the cane-supply, against which not one of the many experts had given any warning. The planters had, I think every one of them, grievously overestimated the number of tons which they could furnish. They had also, perhaps owing to miscalculation, failed to supply themselves with sufficient mules to carry such canes as they had to the tramway, and though this want was little felt at first when the fields were being "cut" which were near the line, it became serious when the more distant were reached and when, moreover, heavy rains had rendered the rich soil difficult for carriage. And so it happened that from one cause or another even the short supply of canes that were actually grown could not be all taken off during the "crop-time." Again, though the rich soil of the valley produced large crops of canes, an exceptional rainfall there rendered the juice of low quality as regards saccharine, and consequently the return of sugar per ton was much below expectation. Together with these there were many other troubles on account of the factory which beset me at this period, and caused me interminable correspondence, both local and with the directors in England. To mention one. Though the manager and the English employees lived in houses built in a dry and comparatively healthy spot some two hundred feet above the sea, one or other of them was always ill, sometimes several together. The residents of the valley, whether white or

coloured, had shown no signs of malaria; but it now proved to exist there, and told severely upon newly arrived Europeans whose work at the factory exposed them to it. As is commonly the case (especially with uneducated men who have no means of occupying themselves during the hours of rest), some of these endeavoured to overcome with strong drink the lassitude which, as I well knew by personal experience, is apt to beset the intervals of malarial fever. The manager, whom I believe to have been of temperate habits when he came to the island two years before, unfortunately succumbed to this temptation, which was no doubt increased by the worries incident to his exceptionally difficult task. Recognising in him valuable qualities and qualifications which it would be difficult to find elsewhere in combination, I had come to like him, and was exceedingly loth to deal severely with him. But when, after repeated warnings I found him again and again unfit for work, I was compelled in the middle of the "crop" to replace him with an estate-manager obtained from Guiana and recommended by the attorney of Mr. Quintin Hogg.

But notwithstanding all these drawbacks and disappointments, the sugar of excellent quality manufactured by the works would have realised sufficient for a fair dividend on the capital of the company even in this first year, had the price of sugar remained as it was when the company was founded. But the market fell and continued to fall until it reached, and in subsequent years rarely or never surmounted, a point far below the lowest of previous experience. In my Blue Book report of 1871 I had anticipated a decline in consequence of the bounties on export granted by foreign countries. But in common, I believe, with everyone else, I failed to foresee the extent of this bounty infection and how it would spread and increase over the whole continent of Europe and the United States, until the value of sugar had been diminished by half, sometimes more than half. Being in subsequent years for the most part at an immense distance both from London and the

West Indies, I had but little opportunity of following the affairs of the company; but I do not doubt that this, if not the only, was the chief cause of the failure of the company. Lord Walden, who on account of ill-health resigned very shortly after the commencement of operations, was succeeded by a chairman of the first order of business capacity, who devoted himself to his duty with untiring patience and perseverance; so that no fault could be found with the English direction, especially as that was for a time aided by the experience of Mr. Hogg, a most successful West India proprietor. But from whatever causes, the company never paid a dividend, and after some years of precarious existence, the business passed into other hands.

The serious pecuniary loss to myself, my own and my wife's family, and my immediate friends, amounted in the aggregate to close upon £20,000. But though the pain and disappointment thus caused was severe, there was some compensation in the thought that the colony on the whole gained largely by this enterprise. There was, indeed, a direct loss of the £30,000 contributed from the colonial funds; but, on the other hand, expenditure, including that upon costly machinery which is still being used, to the extent of some £120,000 accrued to the benefit of the island. Moreover, before the failure of this factory became recognised, two or three other such factories were established which, with the original one still working, have largely increased the sugar crop of the island and thus caused a great increase of trade and revenue. Thus my work on this project was by no means wholly thrown away.

I turn now to a more agreeable subject, which, however, at the time was scarcely less embarrassing—I refer to the Civil Code and the means taken before I left the island for passing it into law. In July, after a complete copy of the proposed Code had, after public notice, been for some five weeks lying at the Registry for inspection, I brought

into Council a Bill for its legalisation. I had at first intended to have it read and debated clause by clause in Committee; but it soon became evident from the opposition aroused that this mode of proceeding would take months; and when the summons arrived for me to proceed to England, the chance being considerable that I should never return, I felt that some other course must be adopted in order to save the work of three weary years. For the Chief Justice was feeling the bitterness of Romanist hostility against the marriage provisions, causing it to be publicly known that I was their sole author, and I could see plainly the improbability of his maintaining his position firmly in my absence against an opposition having the Governor-in-Chief in sympathy with it. Under these difficult circumstances, when I was almost in despair, there occurred to me during a sleepless night, by a kind of inspiration, the following device, which I at once put into execution.

Without a day's delay, I drafted a Bill in which the Code appeared as a schedule. It contained a clause suspending its operation until Her Majesty's sanction was proclaimed in the colony and legalising the Code as it might be amended in the meantime by the Legislative Council, whether under the instructions of the Secretary of State or otherwise. I correctly anticipated that the opposition members would, in the case of this Bill, confine themselves for the moment to its principal portion and permit the schedule to be formally read without debate. For the opportunity would come afterwards of bringing their weight to bear upon the objectionable clauses with a considerable chance that, in my absence, there would be little or none in the opposite scale. And so, after debates in which there was little reflection of the violent language which had been used by the priesthood, the Bill was passed by the official vote, those of the officials who as Roman Catholics were in heart opposed, no doubt expecting to justify themselves to their Church on the ground

that while fulfilling their duties as Government servants they were in no way prejudicing an ultimate decision in favour of the ecclesiastical view. In the protest made immediately afterwards by the unofficial members the only point on which they were agreed was as to the indiscreet haste with which the lately compiled Code of Civil Law "had been forced through the Council by the official majority." My reply to this was obvious and complete. The Code had not been forced through at all, there being still the fullest opportunity for the consideration, discussion, and amendment of the few disputed points in a long compilation, by far the greater part of which all parties regarded as likely to be useful.

And now as to the provisions which caused this unusually strenuous opposition, and which were all nevertheless eventually sanctioned. The merchant members who were Protestants, approving generally the rest of the Code, were hostile to the clauses abolishing imprisonment for debt. These also, although entirely approved by the Chief Justice, were, as was well known, also drafted by me. They were much in accord with the recently passed English law on the same subject—such imprisonment being continued merely for disobedience of an order of Court made against one who could pay and would not. I insisted upon this amendment of the law, as there had been several cases within my knowledge, and probably many others before my time, where unfortunate people who had no means of paying had been kept in gaol for long periods simply out of revenge on the part of their creditors.

The provisions in respect of marriage provoked more general opposition. The custom which had been for many years permitted to supersede the existing law was highly objectionable, to use no stronger term. The French law on this subject had for the most part been annulled by the Queen's Order in Council of 7th September, 1838, which prescribed certain formalities as indispensable to valid marriage—formalities which, it may be remarked, would

preclude marriage *in extremis*. But the Catholic priests had for many years ignored these formalities altogether, and had celebrated all marriages, including those *in extremis*, on the strength of dispensation by the Archbishop. It seems almost incredible, but is yet true, that the Attorney-General of the colony officially justified this proceeding on the ground that the Order in Council was in violation of the Proclamation of 1803, whereby, as he alleged, the captors of St. Lucia, who issued it, had guaranteed to the inhabitants "les mêmes avantages qu'avant la dernière cession." On turning to the records I found that on the occasion of capture in question the island had surrendered unconditionally, and that the Proclamation of the captors merely guaranteed to the people "the enjoyment of their properties under the existing law until the decision of His Majesty should be definitely pronounced." But even if the terms of the Proclamation could be held to override the subsequent Order in Council and the quotation from it had been correct, it is extremely doubtful whether the action of the priests would have been legal even under the law existing at the time of the *dernière cession*. For there is a strong presumption that at that time the *coutume de Paris* modified by royal edicts (which had previously been the law), had been superseded by the Republican Code of 1789, by which no other than civil marriage was recognised. But even failing this, there is the edict of Louis XVI., which became law in Martinique (then under the same government as St. Lucia)[1] in 1787, and which authorises marriage by the officers of justice, and neither this nor any other law recognised marriage *in extremis*.

Another objection urged against the marriage provisions was their non-recognition of the dispensing power of the Church. This dispensation, I may remark, had been used not merely as against the legal formalities required by law, but to permit, in consideration of very heavy fees, the union

[1] The French records of St. Lucia had mostly been lost, but there is little doubt as to this law having come into force there at the same time.

of near relations. My reply, of course, was that no such power had legally existed; but I did not say, what was in fact the truth, that most of the Catholic marriages for many years had been null and void, and that if the question was ever raised it would have to be settled by an *ex post facto* law such as has sometimes been passed by the British Parliament. Altogether my proposed provisions were more liberal in respect of religious marriage than that which has been deemed necessary in Catholic countries such as France, Belgium, and Austria, where a civil ceremony is indispensable. For either religious or civil marriage was to be valid alone under easy conditions. As regards *in extremis*, I had reproduced what had been the law of France for more than a century, and I may mention, by the way, that a far more stringent law on this subject had been sanctioned for Trinidad, where a priest celebrating such a marriage (in any case having no legal effect) is guilty of felony unless he gives notice with reference to certain particulars within seven days.

I forwarded the Bill, as passed, to Hennessey, with an urgent request that he would permit me to assent to it, in order that my signature of assent might appear in the future upon what had been mainly the product of my labour; pointing out at the same time that the clause suspending operation until the Code was in a form approved by the Queen precluded any just objection to this course. But Bishop O'Connor, who was at the time *locum tenens* for the Archbishop, had written that the marriage chapter was a "scandal which is calculated to arouse among the people feelings of just indignation," and also, "The Attorney-General has done what, as a Catholic, he ought to do, viz. consulted his Archbishop to ascertain if he can vote lawfully for such an ordinance; he is ready to tender his resignation rather than violate his conscience. The judgment of the Archbishop is that he cannot conscientiously vote for the clauses which contradict the law of the Church." Whether moved by priestly injunction or other-

wise, Hennessey did not accede to my request, and though his refusal to do so was disapproved at home, the despatch on the subject could not have reached Barbados until he had left for Hong Kong.

Early in August we embarked for England in compliance with Lord Carnarvon's summons, and then practically came to an end my administration of St. Lucia—more than seven years from its commencement. For though I returned in February, 1878, my stay of only a few weeks was too short for any effective work. I may mention, however, that in the meantime the Civil Code, after careful revision by Mr. (now Sir John) Bramston, the legal adviser of the Colonial Office, and after further consideration by a committee, consisting of Chief Justice Armstrong and a local barrister, was finally sanctioned and became law, with, I believe, not a single substantial alteration from my draft.

The Code of Civil Procedure, which was also sanctioned about the same time, is, I believe, almost precisely as I left it in 1874.

Besides these codes, I left behind me an almost complete draft of a consolidated law relating to summary offences, which I do not doubt was passed after my departure, though the fact was never made known to me.

On the whole, in view of the many other measures previously mentioned, which resulted in a greatly enhanced trade, a revenue increased by more than fifty per cent., and considerably improved security both for life and property, I can look back upon my work in St. Lucia, which occupied the best years of my life, with the feeling that though bestowed upon an unimportant corner of the Empire, it was not altogether thrown away.

TRINIDAD

TRINIDAD

CHAPTER I

A spelling-bee—Mr. Robert Lowe (Lord Sherbrooke) at Caterham—My impressions of him—His match-tax proposal—An enemy's epitaph of him—Appointed Acting-Governor of Trinidad—Proceed thither—Hennessey's escape from Royal Commission—Cold reception at Trinidad—New Government House—Hostile motion in Council, and happy result—Visit of North American Squadron—Admiral Sir Cooper Key—Copper poisoning at Government House—Ball given by colonists—A painful duty—Withhold assent from recently passed law—Revolution in Venezuela and difficulty caused thereby—Visit San Fernando—Great Central Factory—Extravagant bridge—Defect in Immigration Law—Complaints against magistrates in India.

AT one time there was much in vogue a diversion called a "spelling-bee." One of these took place on board, on our voyage from St. Lucia to England, in which nearly all the passengers took part. I was appointed umpire, and after a severe competition among a large number of persons, the final struggle lay between two—a young school-girl and a commercial traveller. Many words were correctly spelt by both until I set them "catamaran." This time the "bagman" was wrong and the girl right; so I awarded the prize to her. The man was very angry and protested that the word was unfair. "It is not," said he, in an angry tone, "an English word." I replied that, like many others, it had become so by usage. Still unsatisfied, and insufficiently chivalrous to yield the palm to the girl, he appealed to the dictionary. Three different ones were found on board, and when it was found they all contained "catamaran," he at length with a very bad

grace gave way. For the rest of the voyage the nickname "Catamaran" attached to him, and he met me always with a scowl, which could hardly have been more sinister if I had done him a deadly injury.

On landing we went to Footscray Place in Kent. Here my wife underwent a serious illness, which the doctors unanimously attributed to a cause which ordinary skill in St. Lucia would have averted.

In consequence of this illness the greater part of our time during the next three months was passed either at Footscray Place or at Mr. Pender's house in Arlington Street (formerly the London residence of "Bear" Ellice, and with intervening occupation by Horace Walpole, once inhabited by the celebrated Nell Gwynne). I paid alone, however, a visit of some days to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lowe at their house at Caterham. I had made their acquaintance through their fondness for my wife, whom they had known from early girlhood. Mrs. Lowe interested me much with an account of the life led by them when Mr. Lowe was a leader-writer for *The Times*. She said that at any hour of the night or early morning they would be aroused by a messenger from *The Times* office, bringing the news that some important event had occurred which required notice in an article to be published in the immediately ensuing issue of the paper. She would then get up and write from her husband's dictation while he was still in bed, messengers carrying off to the printers each slip as soon as finished. I heard at the same time much which was most interesting about their life in Australia. Mr. Lowe showed me his spectacles, which were of a kind possibly well known, though I have never seen or heard of such elsewhere. They consisted of two eye-shaped pieces of tin in the form of a shallow saucer with the concave side inwards. In the centre of each, so as to be opposite the pupil of the eye, was a scarcely visible hole. No pebble or glass was used, and the advantage to the sight consisted merely in the exclusion of light and the

concentration of the field of view. Without these glasses Mr. Lowe, who had the pink eyes of all albinos, was almost blind. With them he could see with effort, but fairly well.

To Mr. Lowe's example I owe the adoption, for my own use, of two machines which render me valuable service even at the present day. I refer to the bicycle and the typewriter. Mr. Lowe took daily exercise on one of the clumsy "wheels," which were the best then invented, the "safety" being of much later date. He strongly advised me to take to one also, as a potent means of health improvement. I consequently took two or three lessons soon afterwards, which were brought to an end by my departure from England. I learnt enough, however, then to render comparatively easy the acquisition of a tolerable proficiency when in Paris some twenty years afterwards, Mezger, the celebrated *masseur*, recommended to me the exercise for the strengthening of a weak heart. When care is used to avoid excess, there is no doubt about the value of the machine for this purpose. And so, at the age of sixty-eight, I continue occasionally to use it.

Mr. Lowe had but recently taken to the typewriter, which I had never seen before. He was much pleased with it, saying that it saved his own eyes and his correspondents' temper. My own hand having become execrable from too much writing under extreme pressure, I immediately, after leaving Caterham, obtained a machine, and in the course of a few days wrote or "typed" to Mr. Lowe a letter upon it. To this he made a characteristic reply, also in typewriting, which was highly complimentary about my suddenly acquired proficiency; and after remarking that this surpassed his after months of practice—a circumstance by no means to be wondered at in consideration of his defective eyesight—he added that it was only another proof that "old dogs cannot learn young tricks." In the same letter, referring to a recent article in *The Times*, the purport of which I have forgotten, he said that its argument was a *petitio principii*.

Mr. Lowe had in some respects the most remarkable intellect with which I have ever come in contact, not excepting Mr. Gladstone. He had a capacity for clearness and incisiveness of expression which I have never known equalled. I attribute his comparative failure as a politician to his extreme "straightness" of speech. He was intolerant of slovenly thinking, even of slow understanding. When he had enunciated a proposition with a perspicuity which he thought should make it understood by an average mind, he would not further trouble himself. He could not, as Gladstone commonly did, explain what he intended again and again in different terms and with varied illustration, so as to make it intelligible to the meanest capacity. He ignored the fact that people who are stupid or slow of comprehension have sometimes an influence which renders them worth conciliating. Hence though he had warm friends they were very few, and such political following as he had at one time obtained owed little to personal attachment. At the same time, that which brought him the most general unpopularity—the proposal of the match-tax—I believe to be a measure which ought to have been pressed and passed.

Parliament at the time was influenced and imposed upon by the procession of wretched-looking workers. Their wages being already so small could hardly have been reduced, and beyond an infinitesimal increase in the price of matches (which is now so low as to cause enormous waste) any loss caused by the tax would have fallen upon employers, who could well afford some deduction from their profits. Altogether I venture to agree with Mr. Lowe that there is scarcely any nameable tax which would be so little felt in proportion to the amount raised, and I should not be surprised if some day another harassed Chancellor of the Exchequer, supported by a strong majority, were again to propose a match-tax. In such case Mr. Lowe will be shown to have been as wise in this matter as he has undoubtedly proved to be in others of greater importance.

Shortly before my visit to Caterham an epitaph for Mr. Lowe had been published, which ran something like this:—

"Here lie the bones of Robert Lowe,
A faithless friend and a bitter foe.
Where he's gone I do not know;
If to the realms of peace and love,
Farewell to happiness above,
If to a place of lower level,
Then we commiserate the devil."

It was scurrilous and grossly unjust; yet Mr. Lowe, proudly conscious of its injustice, evinced no sign of anger in referring to it. On the contrary, he had been amusing himself by making paraphrases of the English lines of the libel in Greek and Latin verse. At my request he dictated these to me as I wrote them. Though the paper containing them has been unfortunately lost, I believe that I sufficiently well remember the Latin version:—

"Robertus Humilis hic jacet
Qui nobis mortuus valde placet;
Amicus minimè fidelis,
Amarus hostis et crudelis;
Quaenam conditio sit futura
Ambigitur, sed, spero, dura.
Si coelum scandet iste pestis
Vale concordia coelestis,
Si apud inferos jacebit
Diabolus etiam poenitebit
Et nos diaboli miserebit."[1]

When I left Caterham after a visit of only a few days I had conceived for Lord Sherbrooke a liking bordering on affection. He had a warm heart, and his hatred and scorn for injustice and oppression was such as to win my warm

[1] Quite recently, and since writing the above paragraph, I have read the Life of Lord Sherbrooke, of which I had not previously heard. In it are not only Lord Sherbrooke's paraphrases of the epitaph, but also others in Greek, Latin, and Italian by Mr. Gladstone. The official Latin version is almost identical with mine, with the exceptions of "Conditio qualis" for "Quaenam conditio" and "sit" for "sed."

sympathy. Altogether I judged his character to have differed widely from the ordinary estimate of it by those who only knew him in public life.

In December I received from Lord Carnarvon an offer, which I gladly accepted, of the Acting-Governorship of Trinidad, during the absence on a year's leave of Mr. Irving, the permanent Governor. My gratification, however, was not from any prospect of pecuniary advantage. For though the half-salaries of my own and the acting office would make up an emolument in the aggregate three times as large as the St. Lucia salary, I knew that expenditure must be proportionately even greater. For though he has little more than half the income of the permanent officer, an acting-governor must spend almost as much on establishment and entertaining, or, however well he perform his other duties, his administration will not be regarded as a success; and I felt that this aid to popularity was especially necessary to myself, acting in a colony where all the leading people were sure to be strongly prejudiced against me from sympathy with the Guiana planters. What I was really glad of in this appointment, was the improvement of official position and the opportunity of work in a much larger sphere. Trinidad is six times the size of St. Lucia, and had then a revenue ten times greater, with population and trade in similar proportion. The larger island, moreover, was in an exceedingly flourishing condition, and, as I calculated at the time, its exports per head of population exceeded in value those of any other colony or country of which I could obtain statistics.

On the *Nile*, which had carried me across the Atlantic four times previously, I had as *compagnon de voyage* Mr. Barlee, who had been for a long time Colonial Secretary of Western Australia, and was going out to undertake his first administration as Lieutenant-Governor of Honduras. He told me that he had been nominated for recommendation to the Queen as a member of the Royal Commission which had been going out to investigate the causes of the

troubles in Barbados; but that suddenly, and to him inexplicably, the projected inquiry was withdrawn. Years afterwards I learnt from one, who claimed to have seen the telegram, that Hennessey had wired home to a lady of great influence to the following effect: "Save me from this Commission, or I perish"; and that in this way Hennessey escaped from an extremely awkward position.

Again years afterwards, I happened to tell this story to a distinguished admiral who was staying with me at the time, when he said: "How very extraordinary! I thought no one had seen that telegram but myself"; and then it for the first time occurred to me that he was a great friend of the influential recipient.

Changing into an inter-colonial steamer at Barbados on the 1st of February, I arrived in two days at Port of Spain, Trinidad, touching on the way at St. Lucia (where many came off to congratulate me), St. Vincent, and Grenada.

My reception at Trinidad I knew would not be a warm one; it proved to be frigid beyond anticipation. Scarcely any preparation had been made, and for some time I thought that I should have to land alone. However, before disembarking there arrived a Mr. Bourne, a member of the Legislative Council, whom I had known in Demerara, when he was visiting his father-in-law, my old friend Crosby. And just as I was getting into the boat to go ashore appeared Mr. Bushe, the Colonial Secretary, who had been acting as Governor, and whom my appointment had superseded. Though cordiality could not be expected under the circumstances, I am bound to say that both then and afterwards he behaved unexceptionally, and responded loyally to my special efforts to lessen his natural feeling of disappointment. Yet I was not long in perceiving justification for Lord Carnarvon's action in appointing an outsider to a vacancy in the Government which might last for a year or more. Such, indeed, should always be the rule where the local candidate has been a long time in the colony and has family connections there.

The Government House, to which we drove up on landing, was a much more imposing residence than the bungalow cottage of pleasant memories where I had stayed with the Gordons. But I cannot regard it as an architectural success either within or without. Considering that the mean daily temperature of Trinidad is little less than 80° Fahrenheit all the year round, and that owing to its neighbourhood to the Equator there is very little difference between the hottest and coolest months, it was somewhat surprising to find verandahs so high and narrow as to be almost useless for keeping out the sun. The building had cost an enormous sum, I believe £40,000, and yet, though it contained fine rooms for entertaining, was in no other way comparable to the Government House at Hong Kong, which cost much less. This and the police barracks, costing nearly £80,000—and yet, owing to the absurd size of the rooms, insufficiently large to contain the small force required—were memorials of serious mistakes made subsequent to the régime of Arthur Gordon.

After breakfast, at which I was first introduced to the oysters which grow on trees (mentioned in *Tom Cringle's Log*), a branch covered with them being on the table, I, in company with Mr. Bushe and his son, whom I had appointed to act temporarily as my private secretary, was driven down to the Government offices to be sworn in before the Legislative Council. A faint cheer was raised by the people assembled about the door as we drove up; but when I entered the council chamber, where the members were seated round a great horseshoe table, they, while rising with proper respect, preserved a demeanour which seemed chilling. After the Queen's Commission had been read and I had been duly sworn by the Chief Justice, a motion was at once made for the production of the despatch announcing my appointment. Though such a request was a very unusual one, and one which I might have justifiably refused, the expression of the Queen's pleasure in her Commission being really all that was necessary for a loyal

acceptance of the appointment, I at once saw that the opportunity was one to be seized for clearing the situation and for rendering the supersession of Mr. Bushe more bearable by him and more satisfactory to the colonists. I said, therefore, that I was most glad of the opportunity to state that my appointment must not be regarded as in any way a reflection on Mr. Bushe, whose long and valuable services were fully recognised, but, as Lord Carnarvon's despatch would show, simply because it was desirable that an acting appointment, which might be for a somewhat long period, should be held by one who had had no previous connection with the colony. I added that I was most glad to find that Mr. Bushe had fully justified his high reputation by loyally accepting the situation, and that I did not doubt our official relations would be (and they certainly should be as far as I could make them) of so cordial a character that his experience would continue to be of great assistance towards the due administration of the government. Under the circumstances, if the terms of the motion were modified so as to no longer imply an obligation on my part to produce the despatch, I would most gladly consent to it. My suggestion was at once adopted, and the despatch read, my speech having been received with marked approval. In the afternoon, when the whole of the members and many other leading people of the community came to pay their respects at Government House, it seemed as if the view previously taken of me had already been considerably modified.

Two or three days after my arrival, there came into the harbour of Port of Spain several of the ships of the fleet serving on the North American and West Indian Station. Vice-Admiral Sir Cooper Key, with his personal staff and two other captains (one of them now Admiral Sir James Erskine, afterwards better known to me when he was Commodore of the Australian Station), came to stay at Government House. The reception of so many guests, together with the leading colonists expecting to meet them, was rather risky at the commencement of my housekeeping

with a very much extemporised establishment. However, all went well, with one disagreeable exception. On the second evening after the Admiral's arrival I had a large dinner-party, to which various soldiers and leading colonists were asked to meet the officers of the fleet staying with me. Being far from well after my long sea-voyage, I went to bed early, leaving the Admiral and the rest of my guests playing "pool" in the billiard-room under the care of Mr. Bushe. During the night I was seized with violent pains, and next morning found to my dismay that all my guests, including the Admiral, had suffered similarly, the symptoms being those of copper poisoning. On investigation I found that some of the kitchen vessels which had been brought into requisition for an unusual number of guests were in a neglected condition, and the result might easily have been tragic.

I quote now from a diary, kept for my wife's information on her arrival.

Erskine left in the afternoon, much to my regret, and Lord Parker, who had arrived on the *Bellerophon*, came to occupy his room. At dinner were the guests in the house and the captain of the *Dryad*, and afterwards the whole party, except the Admiral, who was still very unwell, went to a ball given in honour of the fleet at the Prince's Building.[1] I was received at the door by two of the stewards, the band playing "God save the Queen," and was led up to a dais covered with red cloth at the end of a really fine ball-room. I danced the first quadrille with Mrs. Bushe, the chief lady of the colony. She was the daughter of Archdeacon Cummins and a sister of Lady Harris (wife of a former Governor of Trinidad and mother of the very pretty girl who married Haig, the Duke of Edinburgh's equerry). Though the ball had been very hastily organised, it was a success; the supper was tolerable, and the decorations, consisting chiefly of

[1] So named after Prince Alfred, afterwards Duke of Edinburgh and Grand Duke of Saxe-Coburg.

huge palm leaves reaching from the ground to the ceiling of the room, some thirty-five feet high, were in good taste. Altogether I was much pleased with my first impression of Trinidad society. Parker, I may mention, was irate that the band did not play "God save the Queen" again on my leaving, as it is usual in other colonies, but on inquiry it appeared that this had not been the custom here and that certainly no slight had been intended.

Friday, February 9th, 1877.—This morning said "good-bye" with great regret to the Admiral and sailors, Lord Parker, who had obtained a passage on the *Dryad*, also leaving. Yesterday I had to discharge my first really disagreeable duty in refusing an advance of two months' salary to one of the higher officers of Government, who, it appears, is in great pecuniary difficulties. All such advances have been invariably refused by me, because if allowed to one they must be granted to other officers. I felt impelled to declare that whatever other Governors may have considered themselves justified in doing, I was unable to do what I regarded as injurious to the Service.

Saturday, February 10th.—Lawn tennis with Bushe in early morning. Astonished to find that the marketing accounts for the week are considerably beyond what I receive in salary, without any allowance for Marion's expenses in England. Living is ruinous. It, no doubt, counts for something that three servants, employed by Government to look after the house, have all their families close at hand. Telegraphed to the General at Barbados an offer for Hennessey's carriage and horses, as yet unsold. The only conveyance to be got here—at six dollars a day—is by no means equal in appearance to one of the better flys of an English watering-place. The three local newspapers all appear confident I have come out to carry out some mysterious policy, and are evidently forming expectations which will be grievously disappointed. I shall not be here long enough to carry out any substantial reforms, and I cannot, in loyalty to the permanent Governor, take legis-

lative action in any way differing substantially from his policy.

Sunday, February 11th.—The church where I attended morning service has no pretensions to architecture, but looked well cared for, and seemed, together with the appearance of the congregation, to betoken a thriving community —as, indeed, does everything else which I have seen here. The usual prayer for His Excellency the Governor being read, with the substitution of "Lieutenant-Governor" for "Governor," the pointed reference to me caused, I noticed, the whole congregation to look in my direction. Walked home with Dr. Mitchell, the chief of the Immigration Department, who stayed to luncheon. Afterwards we discussed immigration matters, of which his experience is second to none in the West Indies. Later, walked through the Botanic Garden with Mr. Tanner, Director of Works, and Dr. Crane, the Surgeon-General, who came to dinner afterwards. Both of them highly intelligent, well-educated, and, I should judge, trustworthy officers.

Petitions begin to pour in, most of them, as in St. Lucia, for quite impossible favours. One, this morning, refers to the decision of the examiners who have rejected two candidates for free education in the Royal College, and asks me to set it aside, on the ground that their answers were on the whole good enough, and that many great men have been wanting in some branch of "educational knowledge." As an instance of this, among others of a similar kind, was cited Sheridan's ignorance of arithmetic! Worked from 9.50 till 1.50 at a mass of papers requiring to be dealt with, among them being (1) the medical account of the voyage of the immigrant ship recently arrived, (2) a long quarrel between the two managers of a Government-assisted primary school, neither of whom seems fit for his place, and (3) a controversy between the Audit Office and the newly established Customs Department. Mr. Bushe presented to me, for my formal assent, two ordinances which were passed by the Council just before my arrival, saying

that my action would be merely ministerial, as the ordinances had been passed at the instance of Governor Irving. I differed from this view, saying that, in making these passed Bills into law by my assent, I became personally responsible for them, and that, therefore, I could not sign them until I had read and considered them. I, of course, would not think of altering what had been approved by the permanent Governor, for whom I was acting; but if these proposed laws contained principles which I did not approve, as they seemed to do at first sight, I should feel impelled to refer them to the Secretary of State before assenting. Visited and made a careful inspection of the gaol of Port of Spain, the principal one in the island. All that I saw there reflects great credit on the administration.

Tuesday, February 13th.—Reading in the night a Parliamentary Blue Book, was surprised to find there a despatch of mine on Hennessey's famous six points of Confederation. As usual, one of the most important sentences is made into nonsense by a misprint. Hennessey makes use of this and other despatches in a manner somewhat unwarranted. I was very far from being in favour of what I believe to have been his general scheme of Confederation, and I dealt with nothing beyond the specific "six points." My sudden departure from St. Lucia prevented me from writing, according to my expressed intention, the further despatch, enunciating views differing considerably from those of the other "advocates of Confederation." Held an Executive Council, the members being the officer commanding the troops, the Colonial Secretary, and the Attorney-General. Among other matters discussed were the measures to be taken in view of the threatened revolution in Venezuela, the movers in which are apparently making this colony their base of operations —much to the vexation of the Venezuelan Consul, who keeps writing indignant letters on the subject. I find that nothing can be done under the Foreign Enlistment Act unless the revolution has actually broken out and the

revolutionists have attained an established footing such as to bring them under the extended meaning of "a foreign state." Under a local law I can stop the exportation of arms, and this has already been done. But I believe a large consignment got away last week, the Consul only giving notice when the vessel had left her moorings and could not be overhauled. Without information given in time, I am practically helpless, as it is obviously out of the question to have opened every exported package. I much wish I could do more to frustrate these acts intended for hostility to an established government. But for the moment I do not see my way to do so.

Among my callers were the Archbishop (Roman Catholic) and his coadjutor Bishop, my assailant in the controversy about civil marriage in St. Lucia. The Archbishop naively remarked that when we parted in St. Lucia he had not expected to meet me next here. I replied that it was by me equally unexpected and not on that account less pleasurable. Mr. Frederick Warner, a Harrow man, who has been long practising here as a lawyer, also called. He seemed a thorough gentleman, and I am glad to have such a one in the Council. Besides the visitors of to-day, some hundred odd people have written their names in the book.

Wednesday, *February* 14*th*.—Attorney-General came to breakfast, after which we worked together at a scheme for the more effectual collection of the legacy duty, which is now evaded by three-fourths of the people who ought to pay. About one, drove to the wharf and embarked in the Government steamer *Pelican*, which is used for carrying the Governor about the Gulf of Paria. Mr. Tanner, the chief of the Works Department, accompanied me. Our destination was San Fernando, distant about forty miles. The sea was smooth, as it ordinarily is in the gulf, and with the trade wind blowing freshly in our faces, there could not be more delightful travelling. The only objects specially worth notice on the journey were the pelicans, which, as we approached San Fernando, were collected in very large num-

bers. A large shoal of fish must have been in the bay, for the huge birds were continually swooping down into the water, and in so far as I could see, always secured a fish. Shortly before getting in we met one of the local steamers loaded with passengers. She dipped her flag as we passed, and I, as in duty bound, got up and doffed my helmet in acknowledgment, the Union Jack being also dipped.

Thursday, February 15th.—Drove off early to see the great "Usine" of St. Madeleine, five miles distant, belonging to the Colonial Company, of which my host, Bourne (son-in-law of my Demerara friend, Crosby), is the chief representative in the colony. Though somewhat larger, it is in appearance much like the St. Lucia factory, but I observed signs of greater perfection in working arrangements, possibly owing to its being longer in use. These huge works, with their enormously heavy machinery, established so far from the sea in a country previously accessible only by bridle-paths, is a striking monument of what Anglo-Saxon energy is capable even under a broiling sun. The white manager, but recently arrived from England, looked in good health, though parts of the factory into which he has to go have a heat of something like 120° Fahrenheit. Later, drove to see a bridge which has proved a costly mistake. It is of iron, with a span of something like 200 feet, though one of 50 feet with central pillars, to which there was no objection, would have served equally well. The cost had been £8,000, when £1,000 would have been amply sufficient. Mr. Bourne, himself an engineer, said five to six hundred pounds.

Friday, February 16th.—Drove early into San Fernando. Inspected the police barracks and court-house—a very large stone building just finished. The cost has been about £30,000, I understand, and yet it seems very ill-adapted to its purpose.[1] After looking into the English and Catholic

[1] The head of the Works Department, who was immediately responsible for these costly mistakes, had some years before been transferred to St. Lucia, a much lower position. I have omitted all reference to my own very disagreeable experiences in connection with this officer.

churches, went over the hospital and inspected carefully its working arrangements. These were a credit to the colony with one exception, and that a serious one — a patient was dying with nothing to hide him from the view of the other patients. This will not occur again. Inspected the ground where it is proposed to construct waterworks for the town. Finally, looked at some quarries which it is in contemplation to buy for Government in order to save the enormous cost of road-metal. Got back very tired, the temperature not being of the coolest. In the evening came to dine Mr. and Mrs. Marryat, he a contemporary of mine at Charterhouse, she belonging to one of the old Spanish families of the island—a very pretty Creole. Both he and Bourne have very unusually liberal views on burning subjects—in some respects the antipodes of those prevalent in Demerara. Marryat recently resigned his seat, after administering a thrashing to a man who had grossly slandered him.

Monday, February 19th.—At the office received an English telegram that Marion had sailed this morning. Long interview with Mr. Ludlow, the Attorney-General, on (1) proposed Legacy Duty measure, and (2) the Imprisonment for Debt Ordinance, to which I have deferred assent, and which after his explanation appears less objectionable than it did at first. I had, however, detected an ambiguity which might be used for the imprisonment of poor debtors for one year when their superiors in delinquencies would get off with six weeks. Determined to send a circular to magistrates asking them how they interpreted this clause, with a view to withhold assent altogether if they any of them construed it in the objectionable way. It would be interesting to know whether any of the members of the Council observed the error and allowed it to pass. Discussed also a proposed Gun Licence measure, for which the planters are asking because one of them was shot a few weeks ago. They want every gun to be registered, whether used or not, and to pay a licence fee. It seemed to me,

and Ludlow agreed, that this would serve no useful purpose. Without placing an indelible mark upon every gun, which would be impracticable, the same licence would cover any number of guns in charge of the same person, and thus the main object of the law would be defeated. The best we can do is to impose a licence for carrying and using. This might raise a little revenue, but would be otherwise of little use. As the result of this interview, and from what I had previously seen of him, I concluded that Ludlow was more able and a better lawyer than any legal officer whom I have yet met with in the West Indies. I feel sure he is "straight" also, the defect in the debt law being evidently an oversight as far as he is concerned. . . . Afterwards a long interview with Dr. Mitchell about immigration matters and certain proposed changes in the law regarding them. One improvement is evidently necessary for the sake, not merely of the immigrants, but of the colony and of the planters themselves. The employer is permitted to register all lost days and to add to the term of indentured service the time represented by their aggregate. This is fair enough if each lost day be mentioned to the immigrant at the time. The practice, however, in many cases is to make known the total only at the end of the original term of service, when the immigrant is quite unable to bring forward any lawful excuse he may have had for one or more of his absences. As a consequence, many regard themselves as unfairly treated, and leave Trinidad, which resource the neighbourhood of Venezuela renders peculiarly easy. Many, Dr. Mitchell thinks, have deserted for this very reason, and their services are lost to the colony, the labour-supply of the more honourable planters being thus unduly reduced. "Lost days" must clearly be established at the time, and, in the case of dispute, before a magistrate.

February 22nd.—This place in my peculiar position certainly allows me no breathing time. At half-past four began to arrive people whom I had asked to a roller-skating

party. This was held in two large rooms opening into one another, which, being unfurnished, had been used by Irving for this purpose. The guests went away evidently pleased. One lady informed me, with amusing frankness: "You know, Your Excellency, we were all against you before you arrived; but the way you dealt with what was intended as an attack on you in Council, and all we have seen since, has made everyone turn the other way round."

Saturday, February 24th.—Courtenay helped me somewhat to-day by making précis of some of the papers. I like him much, and he promises to be very useful, if he is permitted to stay with me as aide-de-camp; but as his regiment is short of officers, that appears to be doubtful. One of the papers to be dealt with to-day was a letter from the committee of the Planters' Association, complaining of the illegal action taken by some of the Bengal magistrates in respect of the recruiting of emigrants for this colony. Oddly enough, I had this very morning written a despatch on this very subject, pointing out to Lord Carnarvon that the hands of the Government on this side would be weakened in exacting all that can be claimed on behalf of the coolies if illegalities in India were permitted to injure the interests of employers. I am told here, I do not know with what truth, that some of the Indian magistrates are interested in Assam tea plantations, for which, as much as in the West Indies, labour is required from outside, and hence the obstruction to emigration for the West Indies. Though the magistrates' action is improper in any case, I trust that the real reason for it is doubt about the coolie's improvement in condition when he comes here. Since I have read more about the extreme poverty of the population of India, I am glad to say that my doubt on this subject is removed. In the short time I have been here I have already been much struck by the difference in appearance and demeanour between the coolie just landed and one who has been a year or more in the colony. The downcast, depressed look of the new-comer is succeeded by a free and independent bear-

ing which by no means betokens servitude or oppression. I attribute this happy state of things largely to Arthur Gordon's work, and the encouragement he gave to Dr. Mitchell, whose judicious management kept things on a fairly satisfactory footing, even through the freezing régime of his successor. Irving, for whom I am acting, in so far as I have seen of his work, seems to have been on the whole a really good and by no means weak Administrator.

My wife having arrived a few days afterwards, thenceforward my life for the eleven succeeding months of my administration was, as regards official work, much as described above. During the whole year I was much troubled by ill-health, and was at that time under the impression, remaining more or less under it until my final breakdown fourteen years afterwards, that very hard exercise was necessary to the maintenance of health in the tropics. This is really a serious mistake, especially for one who is daily working his head for several hours, and thus "burns the candle at both ends." Gentle exercise in the freshest air obtainable is undoubtedly good even for the hardest head-worker. But violent exertion such as produces even temporary exhaustion is bad for everyone, even for those who have no head-work. Of course, a strong constitution which has gone through no severe ordeal may survive in spite of it for a long time; but a certain retribution will come sooner or later. It is now evident to me that my early games at lawn tennis, producing a certain exhaustion before the commencement of work, were a potent aid to the heat in prolonging the effects of the sunstroke of two years before, producing that head weariness after a few hours of work, and the sleeplessness from which I suffered almost continuously at this time. In St. Lucia my exercise was almost exclusively that obtained from rides of rarely more than seven or eight miles, and, except upon the Morne, always from the nature of the country at a slow pace. Had I had a lawn-tennis ground there my work would probably have come to an end long before it did.

In Trinidad, when my wife arrived, I found that she had been forbidden to ride again during the rest of her life, and consequently I made little use of the hack which came by the same steamer which brought her. Such expeditions as we made were therefore entirely on the water or in a carriage, by one or other of which could be reached all parts of the country which were important to be seen during a short and temporary administration.

CHAPTER II

Sunday guests—Charles Warner—Botanical garden—Queen's Birthday—Hair-cropping of female convicts—Vote for increase of Governor's salary disapproved—Mechanical officialism—A curious discovery—Appointed C.M.G.—Misappropriation of revenue fines—First West Indian mangosteens—Speech on railway extension—Isle of Monos—Fish-eating bats—A Guacharo cave—Visit of French Squadron—French official recognition of hospitality—H.M.S. *Eurydice*: her sad fate—Leave Trinidad—Warm "good-bye" demonstration.

SOCIALLY our life in Trinidad was on the whole a pleasant one. The possession of suitable rooms made entertainment easy, and we thus had the pleasure of seeing the young people enjoying themselves at frequent dances. Our official and other formal dinner-parties were indeed as dull as such functions usually are everywhere; but as we had near at hand several educated and agreeable men, with whom was possible a certain freedom of converse, we could always, when desired, make a pleasant addition to our house-party. On almost every Sunday we had as guests Mr. Tanner, Dr. Crane, and, though last, certainly not least, Mr. Charles Warner, who was socially one of the most agreeable men I ever met. Coming of an old West Indian family and born in the West Indies, he had been educated at Eton, where he had apparently taken full advantage of the opportunities which, though offered to all, are seized by so few. Building on the foundation probably laid there, he had become a man of remarkable culture, which together with a considerable fund of humour made him an invaluable addition to our society. It was chiefly owing to him that our Sunday dinners in Trinidad were among the pleasantest social events of our whole colonial life.

The beautiful botanical garden which surrounded our

house was a never-ending source of interest and enjoyment. In one of its deep and specially hot ravines were growing close together specimens of the, I believe nearly allied, trees, "Wardia" and "Amherstia," both of them with huge bunches of beautiful pink flowers growing on long, pendulous strings. The Amherstia, which in colour and in the shape of its flower-clusters was the more beautiful of the two, was not less remarkable for its history than for other peculiarities. I was told, I think by Mr. Prestoe, the accomplished curator of the gardens (who had been educated at Kew under the great Hooker), that this tree has never been seen growing wild, and that the original plant from which all others have been propagated was found flowering in an Indian temple during the viceroyalty of Lord Amherst, from whom it received its name. As in the case of other plants which have been artificially cultivated for ages, seeds are either not produced at all or are no longer prolific. This particular plant has, however, the additional peculiarity that it is extremely difficult to propagate in any way, while only in very exceptional situations, such as the hot, damp gully in the Trinidad garden, can it be induced to flower. Here for the first time in the West Indies had its blossoms been seen, and Mr. Prestoe described to me the many and various efforts he had made to propagate from this tree, for a long time without success. When he had eventually succeeded, it was by burying in the ground a branch, and separating it from the parent stock only after the formation of substantial roots. Even then such was their tenderness that many plants died when transplanted. For further description of these gardens, with their lovely ferns, standard and climbing palms, and other still more beautiful trees, I must refer my readers to the pages of Charles Kingsley's *At Last*. I may, however, mention, as an additional indication of the kind of vegetation by which we were surrounded, that within a very short distance of our house, in no case greater than a hundred and fifty yards, there were three trees, each of which with

its foliage covered two-thirds of an acre. Such, also, is the quickness of growth that some creepers which we planted close to the house shortly after our arrival, in order to relieve the barrenness of the walls, had within ten months grown to the height of some forty feet.

On the Queen's birthday, in order to afford enjoyment to the largest possible number of people, we, besides the usual dinner-party, inaugurated a competition in athletic sports, the first time that there had been such in the island, at least on the same scale. The prizes, which were furnished by public subscription, were won by persons of all classes of society, Europeans, coloured people, and coolies, and the novelty was generally pronounced a great success. The Queen having been on the throne when there took effect the great measure of negro emancipation, her name will always be revered by the people of the West Indies on that account alone. But it is nevertheless well, here as well as elsewhere, to keep alive and stimulate the feeling of loyalty by the provision for the masses of enjoyment connected with the name of the Sovereign.

Early in 1877 I noticed in the returns of the penalties, some sentences of hair-cropping against women, notwithstanding that this form of punishment had been prohibited by the Secretary of State. In reply to my inquiries I found that these sentences were passed merely *in terrorem*, and were not actually inflicted. Regarding this as unsatisfactory, if for no other reason because sooner or later the absence of power to carry out the sentence would be discovered, I was led to investigate the subject. I found that there was a certain class of prisoners who were so hardened and irreclaimable that something more deterrent than the ordinary gaol punishments—such as hard labour, short rations, and solitary confinement—was necessary in order to preserve discipline. The fear of being flogged operated as a wholesome restraint upon the men ; but the women, knowing that this in their case was illegal, could only be kept quiet by the threat of having their hair cut

off. Until such a threat was resorted to, they would render themselves stark naked by tearing off all their clothes, would destroy all prison furniture within their reach, and would make day and night hideous with screaming abuse, of which the negro possesses a specially choice vocabulary. Having satisfied myself that all possible alternatives had been tried in vain, I reported the matter to Lord Carnarvon with a view to the withdrawal of the prohibition. I represented that while corporal punishment was out of the question for women, hair-cropping was the only one that could be suggested for placing them on a just level with men, than whom for purpose of gaol discipline they were, in fact, far more difficult to manage. Negro women dread the loss of their hair even more than do Europeans, and I am inclined to think, from what I have observed, that many of the abandoned class referred to would, if they were offered the choice, even prefer to be flogged. Lord Carnarvon, in his reply, said that evidence was accumulating to the effect that hair-cropping was necessary in certain cases, but he nevertheless maintained his prohibition until further experience had been gained. I have never heard what was the result of the decision, but I should imagine it was not a happy one.

In April, I think, of the same year, a resolution was proposed in Council, without suggestion or countenance from me, that the salary of the Governor should be raised from £4,000 to £6,000. This was carried by the votes of the unofficial members, the officials, including myself, remaining neutral. The grounds were the enhanced cost of living and the increased numbers of the society requiring to be entertained by the Governor, together with the more expensive establishment necessary for the new Government House. At this time there were persistent rumours that Governor Irving, who here at all events proved himself an excellent Administrator, was to be promoted, and that I should in all probability be appointed to succeed him. Thus the resolution, while a marked compliment to Irving, was scarcely

less so to me, and, as I was informed by several of the "unofficials," was intended as such. Though I concurred in thinking that there was ground for increase of the salary, I regarded that proposed as too large, and considered that a smaller addition, such as was approved not long afterwards, would meet the case. At this time, however, Lord Carnarvon declined to sanction any increase, and by telegram, received in October, instructed me to pass the estimates without any of the increases in salaries which had been proposed. The Colonial Office is quite right to be cautious in such matters, as colonists who are inclined to be lavish upon "establishments" in time of prosperity, show themselves sometimes, under less favourable circumstances, equally desirous of reducing them.

In the course of my work here I came across an amusing instance of unscrupulous ingenuity on the part of a former officer of the Government, which taught me a lesson as to the necessity of carefully scrutinising the drafts of all Bills presented to the Legislature. By a former ordinance what was supposed to be the whole town of Port of Spain was divided into two portions, the boundaries of which were described. Tracing out these boundaries on a map, with a view to a new measure which was in contemplation, I observed that a small section of the town had been left out altogether. This omission rendered that part outside the scope of the ordinance and thus caused it to be free of taxation, which accordingly it had ever since escaped. It was at least curious that in this omitted portion had been the residence of the officer by whom the ordinance had probably been drafted, and who was in any case responsible for it.

At one of the meetings of Council, held for the purpose of apportioning the vote available for the maintenance of the public roads, there took place an occurrence which illustrates the inexpediency of permitting public officers to undertake the cultivation of land for profit. The Chief Justice urged the claim of a certain road. I endeavoured to

avoid discussion by intimating my regret at being unable to entertain it. But when the matter was pressed notwithstanding, I was compelled to give as a reason that the vote was for public roads, and that the road in question was a private one which merely served a single cacao plantation. This was, in fact, the Chief Justice's own estate.

At our dinner-party in celebration of the Queen's birthday, or at one given a few days before, I was informed by telegram from the Colonial Office of my appointment as C.M.G. The message was in cipher, and my secretary had deciphered it as far as "The Queen will appoint you," when the guests began to arrive. There was thus no opportunity of learning further, and until all had gone, some three hours after, we were kept in suspense. The rumours of my appointment as Governor had become more precise, as though proceeding from authoritative information, and we had an almost confident hope that this would prove to be announced by the message. When therefore the truth was disclosed, there was a strong revulsion of feeling. Not that I did not fully appreciate this mark of Her Majesty's favour and Lord Carnarvon's recognition of my service in recommending me for it, but in view of what others had received I could scarcely avoid feeling that such a recommendation should have come from the department years before,[1] and that by this time I might fairly look for some permanent promotion. Before obtaining this, however, I had still to wait some years, to undergo even severer experiences, and incur far greater responsibility.

In June I made the unpleasant discovery that the one-third of the proceeds of revenue fines, which was for a long period the legal perquisite of the Governor, had for the previous twelve years been illegally received. As application

[1] In these days the standard of service required for such honours has indeed been lowered, unless it be supposed that modern work is much superior to that of my day. As one out of many instances which might be quoted, I may mention that both the last and present Administrators of St. Lucia received the higher dignity of K.C.M.G. while still in office in that island.

was nearly always made to the Governor to reduce penalties which were inflicted in addition to the loss by seizures, I disapproved from the first of a system making him a judge respecting that in which he was pecuniarily interested. On account of this feeling I had, before the oversight was discovered, reduced penalties probably to a greater extent than the circumstances warranted; so that my share, which without the reduction would have amounted to £806, had in fact been only £20. I at once reported the error of practice which had continued so long, but I have no note of the Secretary of State's decision on the subject. I think, however, it was to the effect that owing to the difficulty of recovery from several Governors (some of whom, I think, were dead), the inadvertence was to be overlooked. As this source of income, however, was, of course, to be closed for the future, I think that the circumstance should have been considered in the decision in respect of the increase of the Governor's salary recommended by the Legislature.

In the middle of the year (which cannot be called summer, as that is eternal) I forwarded for the use of the Queen a package of mangosteens—the first which had ever been produced in the West Indies. They were to be kept as cool as possible during the voyage; but, unfortunately, ice-storage not then having come into vogue, they reached England in a condition unfit for consumption. I do not know whether the cultivation of this delicious fruit has spread in the West Indies. Judging from Eastern experience, the tree flourishes to the extent of producing freely only in Singapore, Java, and in islands with specially moist temperatures close to the line; and it was doubtful in my time whether even the climate of Trinidad was sufficiently equatorial, except under specially favourable circumstances, such as those of our botanic garden under the scientific care of Mr. Prestoe. Recently I have seen this fruit for sale in London, and now that cold-storage has been brought to such perfection that Tasmanian apples, coming through the torrid heat of the Red Sea, arrive here in perfect con-

dition, it is matter for wonder that mangosteens, and other of the more delicate kinds of tropical fruit, do not come in larger quantity to England, where, if offered at somewhat less prohibitive prices, they would probably meet with ready and remunerative sale.

In October, 1877, I brought before the Council a project of railway extension, which had been initiated by Governor Irving. I introduced the subject by a long speech, pointing out in detail the many advantages and the excellent pecuniary prospects of the proposed line. The measures authorising the enterprise, and the raising on the colony's credit of the necessary loan, were passed unanimously. I heard afterwards that this speech and the trouble taken with it were regarded at home as superfluous, inasmuch as the Secretary of State had already approved of the project. I was, however, not aware of this fact, nor was it made known to me by the Colonial Secretary (who had charge of the despatches), when in reporting the passage of the measures through the Council I wrote as follows: "I have not assented to either of these ordinances, because I scarcely feel justified in considering that your lordship has finally decided upon the expediency of the railway." Had I known of the Secretary of State's sanction, I should of course have assented at once. I was very anxious for the immediate commencement of the work, so as not to lose the dry season, and in this very despatch I with this object pressed for sanction by cable. But even if I had known the Secretary of State's approval, I was, and am, unable to regard as supererogatory the task of making clear to the colonists the prospective advantages to be derived from the large sum to be expended. Even in a Crown Colony it is unwise, in the absence of urgent necessity, to exhibit the iron heel of despotism, or to permit it to be supposed that expenditure is to be incurred on the mere *ipse dixit* of the Secretary of State without the fullest consideration for the interests of those who have to bear the necessary taxation. In this case, moreover, previously to my full exposition of the pro-

ject, public opinion was by no means unanimous about its expediency, and even some of the members of Council were doubtful on the subject. That my speech was generally regarded as useful is attested by the fact that I was specially thanked for it in the address which was presented to me by the Legislative Council on my departure a few months afterwards. I understand that the railway in question, for which Governor Irving deserves the chief credit, has fully justified all my anticipations and, notwithstanding the severe depression of the sugar interest, has invariably made a good return of interest on its capital expenditure.

During the hottest season, August and September, we made several short visits to Monos, a secluded bay near the "Dragon's Mouth" entrance to the Gulf of Paria. A hill at the back gave protection from the sun's rays during a considerable portion of every afternoon, and this caused a sensible diminution of temperature; while owing to the receipt of letters only once a day and the impossibility of being approached except by sea from Port of Spain, distant some twenty-five miles, we were afforded there a much-needed rest. The place was not, however, without its drawbacks. There was a great abundance of blood-sucking bats, and it was here that my wife's English maid suffered severely. The bats did not confine their attention to phlebotomy. About nightfall, and by moonlight afterwards, we observed many of them, probably of a different variety, continually dipping into the water, and we had little doubt that they were playing havoc with the small fry with which the bay abounded. The fact of fish-eating by bats being uncertain, we managed with some difficulty to obtain a specimen of these creatures, and on opening it found fish-bones. Rats were not less abundant than bats, and when lying in bed in the early morning we could see them gaily running in and out of the "slats" of the jalousie windows in numbers which would have been terrifying to those unaccustomed to such inconveniences.

But despite these drawbacks, we always greatly enjoyed

our visits to Monos, amusing ourselves during the day with sea-fishing in the calm waters of the gulf—the fish being abundant and readily taking bait—or with excursions round the coast. In one of these we visited a "Guacharo" cave, which proved to be an extremely interesting experience.

The Guacharo is a night bird of the order of goat-suckers, akin to the English nightjar, and like it having a throat almost as large as its body. According to Humboldt, it is killed in large numbers by the Venezuelans of the neighbouring coast with a view to the extraction of oil. Going out only during the night, the bird lives in the daytime in sea-washed caves, congregating there in large numbers. The particular cave visited by us was, in so far as I remember, situate in the "Dragon's Mouth." Our boat, which besides myself and the boat hands contained my wife and her maid, was taken into the narrow entrance with much difficulty. At the moment of entering all on board were made to lie down. For the sea came so near the roof that any head protruding above the gunwale would be liable to be crushed. At length we were fairly inside, and then eyes and ears were greeted with equally remarkable sensations. By the dim light, proceeding only from the opening through which we had come, we could see a large chamber, and upon its numerous ledges, as the eye became more accustomed to the obscurity, could be observed the birds sitting, closely packed together, in numbers probably reaching to many hundreds. The noise made by them, owing to alarm at our intrusion, was so deafening that it was necessary for us to scream to one another in order to be heard. Some flew from one side to another, but by far the greater number "sat tight" and simply watched the intruders.

Wishing to obtain two or three specimens, I had brought with me a small drawing-room pistol, carrying very minute bullets, which I deemed sufficient for the purpose. On firing, the bird aimed at did not move—much to my astonishment, as the distance was one at which in a room

I could hit a half-crown. Again and again I fired, the attempt being equally futile. The water in the cave being almost motionless, the boat scarcely moved, and as no effect of the bullets could be observed on the wall of the cave, I became more and more perplexed, when accidentally the cause of the failure was discovered. A match having been struck for the purpose of finding something which had fallen, all the cartridges used were seen to be lying at the bottom of the boat with the bullets intact. The bore of the pistol having become enlarged, each time the pistol was raised to fire the bullet had dropped out, while the noise of the birds and the snap of the lock had probably prevented me from noticing the absence of explosion. The defect was remedied by improving the fit of the cartridges with paper, and then the desired specimens were quickly obtained. With this amusing discovery ended an incident which the boat hands, in such weird surroundings, had pardonably begun to regard as "uncanny."

In December came into the harbour of Port of Spain a French squadron, including the flagship of Contre-Amiral Maudet. When the Admiral made his official call, accompanied among others by a nephew of Marshal McMahon (at the time, I think, President of the French Republic), I informed him that we did not possess a saluting battery, and as, moreover, there was no British man-of-war in port, we had to our great regret been unable to return his courtesy in saluting the port. I intended this as a hint that he should omit the usual salute to myself when I returned his call. However, when I went on board his ship the next day, he not only fired the prescribed number of guns, but also manned yards—a very unusual compliment. At dinner the night before, to which he came with several of his officers, on my informing him of the pleasure given to Trinidad by the visit of a French squadron, none having been seen there for many years past, he replied that the visit was an equal pleasure to himself, and declared he had specially come to see me. For he had heard much of

me from Admiral Cloué, my former host in Martinique, and also of my reception of other French naval officers, of which he was happy in the opportunity of showing his appreciation.

I have always felt it to be the duty of the Governor of a colony to show all possible courtesy and attention to the ships of friendly Powers visiting its waters. This duty is, I am happy to think, regarded as an obligation by most Governors, but that it is unhappily not so with all I have gathered from several foreign officers who have visited me at different times, and also may perhaps be indicated in the following passage extracted from a naval officer's report which appeared in a French Yellow Book some years afterwards.

The report in question was that of the captain of the French cruiser *Hussard*, who came to Fiji in 1879, and a copy of it was given me in 1882 by Capitaine Menard, of the *Hugon*, when also on a visit to us there. Captain Paregot concludes it by saying: "Son Excellence et Madame Des Vœux nous ont montré une grande aimabilité exempte de toute raideur Anglaise. L'invitation des premiers jours s'est renouvelée plusieurs fois, de telle suite que j'ai passé une grande partie de mon temps au Gouvernement."

Besides the French squadron we received visits during the year from several British ships-of-war. One of them was H.M.S. *Rover*, Captain (now Admiral) Barnardiston, who on leaving through the "Dragon's Mouth" kindly conveyed us down to Monos, thus affording to my wife her first experience on board a man-of-war in motion. Another such visit was from the ill-fated *Eurydice*, for the officers of which, as she stayed some days, we gave a dance. For Captain Hare and some of his officers we took a special liking, which I may presume was reciprocated, as he volunteered a promise that on his way home he would put in to St. Lucia, whither we were expected to return shortly afterwards. This promise was fulfilled, and the beautiful spec-

tacle afforded by the vessel as she left the port of Castries under full sail was almost the last seen of her. For within a month she was lost with all hands in the British Channel when she was on the point of reaching home again.

In January, 1878, I received a letter from Governor Irving announcing his immediate return to the colony, and two days after his arrival, previously writing our names in the Governor's visiting-book, as a matter of respect to Her Majesty's representative, we embarked on the mail steamer which was to take us back to St. Lucia. And then occurred a demonstration which was specially gratifying as being unexpected. Not only the Government steamer, but many other boats of all sorts and descriptions came off crowded with passengers who desired to bid us "good-bye." These included, I believe, not only the whole of the members of Council, and nearly, if not quite all of the prominent persons in the community, but people of every class, from the highest to the lowest. The ordeal of hand-shaking we had to undergo was as pleasing as it was physically severe; all who were able to say a word expressing great, and apparently sincere, regret at our departure. While naturally much touched by this warm and, as we were told, unprecedented demonstration of feeling, we were especially gratified by the contrast thus presented to the extreme coldness of my reception a year before. By the colonists at least my work and my wife's discharge of her duties (which were especially mentioned in a complimentary address presented to me by the Legislative Council) had been fully, and in my case perhaps unduly, appreciated.

FIJI

FIJI

CHAPTER I

Return to St. Lucia—Accept Acting-Governorship of Fiji—Voyage thither—Barbados—Jamaica—Panama—Out of the frying-pan—Disagreeable incident at Acapulco—Thresher and whale: curious difference on the subject—San Francisco—First use of telephone—Hawaii—Leave Northern Hemisphere—Touched by hurricane—Sydney—Medical examination: comical incident—Sydney to Fiji: unpleasant voyage—Arrive at Levuka—Warm greeting from Gordons—Government House, Nasova—Comfort *v.* Magnificence—The Queen's Birthday—Fijian dances—A chief's wife—Month with Gordons—My inauguration as Head Chief: native ceremony—The Vunivalu (ex-King Thakombau)—Habitual cannibalism probably of recent origin—High opinion of Thakombau's character—An accident at table—Maafu, his character and antecedents—Cruelty not inconsistent with great qualities—Pretended angels punished.

I RETURNED to St. Lucia not in the best of spirits, and this especially as recent appointments had made even clearer than before that to keep things quiet and do little was officially regarded as the best claim to promotion.

Some time in February a telegram arrived from the Secretary of State. It stated that Sir Arthur Gordon was leaving Fiji for a year's leave, and asked whether I would proceed thither and act for him, at the same time requesting me, if I consented, to go as quickly as possible. The promotion was not the permanent one I had a right to expect; still, had I been a bachelor, I should have accepted it without hesitation, the more especially as I had presumably been nominated by my friend Arthur Gordon. But, on the other hand, the voyage would be an exceedingly trying one for my wife, who was in very delicate health,

with an equally delicate child only twenty months old. She, however, with her usual courage, insisted that she was willing and desirous to take the risk; and so I accepted.

We left St. Lucia about a fortnight after the receipt of Lord Carnarvon's telegram, and I received on my departure a warm and appreciative address numerously signed by representatives of all classes of the population.

I did not take formal leave of the Council and the colony, as I should have wished to do had I known I was never to return. But my presence there at that moment showed that a merely acting appointment did not necessarily lead to a permanent one; and indeed, as will subsequently appear, my doubt on this point was very nearly being justified. Having determined to go by Panama, San Francisco, and New Zealand—the route suggested by the Colonial Office—we proceeded in the first instance to Barbados to take the mail steamer for Panama.

At Barbados we were hospitably entertained by Governor Sir James Strachan, who, by his cheery manner and with the efficient aid of his charming wife and sister-in-law,[1] did his best to make our two days' stay in the island agreeable.

From Barbados the R.M.S. *Medway* (Captain Revett, with whom I had already made five voyages in the *Nile*) took us to St. Thomas and thence to Jamaica, where we were "put up" for the night by the Governor, Sir Anthony Musgrave. Reaching Colon (called by the Americans "Aspinwall") some ten days after leaving St. Lucia, we at once took the train for Panama. The delights of the journey across the isthmus were heightened by the reflection that it had cost us nearly fifty pounds—the transit being at that time probably the most expensive in the world for so short a distance.

Panama, I should say from what we saw of it, could never be a very attractive place of residence. At the time of our arrival it was even less so than usual. A great fire had driven so many people into our hotel that

[1] Now Lady Falkland.

it was full to overflowing. Only with difficulty could we obtain any lodging at all, and that most uncomfortable. There were no bells, and servants were "conspicuous by their absence." Consequently we had to go ourselves in search of any requirement, with much difficulty securing for purposes of washing a meagre supply of water, suspicious in appearance and odour. The rooms on either side of ours were crammed with men, seen through the open doors to be gambling with their coats off, and whose uproar, continued far into the "small hours," rendered sleep impossible. The food provided and the manner of providing it was on a par with the other arrangements. After the experience of one night and morning we determined to go on board the steamer which was to carry us to 'Frisco, though its departure was not to take place for several days. The *Georgia* apparently had that cleanliness which is characteristic of American steamers, and we therefore congratulated ourselves upon our change of lodging. Alas! for appearances. As night came on we found our "state room" alive with small beetles. Then the attempt to sleep revealed the presence of unmentionable insects of two distinct varieties, one of which in much rough travelling I had merely heard of, but never seen before. A single night was a sufficient ordeal; and for the whole of the three weeks occupied in our voyage to San Francisco we slept on deck. This condition of the ship was no fault of the captain or officers. All that they could do to keep the ship clean was done, but the filthy condition of some of the passengers taken on board at South American ports rendered all their efforts futile.

Despite the discomfort of sleeping many nights on chairs or benches, the voyage was by no means altogether unpleasant. The sea was generally calm, and the views of the mountainous coast of Central America and Mexico presented continual variety and were sometimes grand. Only two incidents of the voyage occur to me as worth recording.

We were lying one night in the harbour of Acapulco—a night which would have been in any case remembered, as owing to the exceeding clearness of the sky, the light of several planets and stars made paths of silver in the water—when I had a disagreeable *rencontre.* Three men, though seeing my wife asleep on a bench in the "social hall," persisted in vociferating loudly close to her. I bore the infliction for some time, but when one of them expectorated in a disgusting manner within a foot of her face, causing her to wake and start up, I entirely lost patience and drove them from the ship.

Immediately afterwards I heard to my dismay that the men I had thus put to flight were Mexican Customs officials; and so until our departure next afternoon I was in continual apprehension of arrest. But luckily I never heard of the matter again. No doubt there are many charming people in Acapulco, but it was my lot not to see them, and when I remember the dirt of the town and the exceeding beauty of its surroundings, I think of it only as a place "where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile."

As we approached Cape St. Lucas, the extreme southern point of Lower California, both air and sea became actually crowded with visible life. The number of gulls and California birds (apparently, from their shape and gliding flight, a small variety of the albatross family) which surrounded the ship, made walking the deck by no means agreeable. The sea was at the same time alive with porpoises, while whales were spouting in all directions, over a dozen being counted at one time. An incident now occurred which has given rise to much discussion in my presence on the part of naval men.

All the passengers on deck believed they witnessed what is held to be a not uncommon spectacle—a whale spouting repeatedly while some heavy body threw itself repeatedly out of the water seemingly in the act of attack.

Though the distance of over a mile precluded certainty

on the subject, nautical authorities asserted that what we saw was a thresher beating a whale. There happened, however, to sit next me in the saloon an old New England sailor, who told me that he had been whaling for forty years in all seas—arctic, antarctic, tropical, and temperate. "Sir," said he, "you may take it from me, there is no fish which thumps the whale as a thresher is said to do. What seems to be a fish jumping upon the whale is really a part of the whale's body."

A few months after this Lieutenant (now Captain) Moore, R.N., then engaged in surveying the Fiji group, was dining at my table at the Nasova Government House in that colony when this subject was discussed. He laughed at this old sailor's view, and said he was quite confident he had often seen a thresher beating a whale, the same being subsequently told me by other sailors. A year afterwards Mr. Moore, still engaged in the same survey, was again dining with me in the same place, when he suddenly said, "The old whaler was right, sir, after all, about the thresher. The other day I saw the same sight which I had often seen before, and as the whale was at no great distance from the ship, I went off in a boat in order to clear up all doubt on the subject. To my astonishment, on getting near to the whale, I found that what I had taken for a thresher was really part of the whale itself—apparently a fin which was being thrown up so as to fall heavily on the animal's back, or the sea close beside it, the integument which joined it to the body being invisible beyond a very short distance; and so I must admit I was wrong." Many other sailors with whom I have discussed the matter have declared themselves as strongly in accord with Captain Moore's first opinion; but I could never ascertain whether they had had the same opportunity for close observation. Where there is a preconceived notion imagination sometimes plays strange tricks.[1]

[1] Having referred my account of the above episode to Captain U. Moore, he confirms it, and kindly adds the following: "It is quite certain, from my

At San Francisco I for the first time had the opportunity of testing the telephone—that wonderful invention which, now so familiar, was then only beginning to come into general use. The astonishment with which I recognised my wife's voice at a distance of some two miles, though it may now excite a smile, was very real indeed.

The first steamer leaving for New Zealand and Sydney was the *Zeelandia*, in which we embarked some thirteen days after our arrival.

About a week afterwards we had the opportunity for a few hours of seeing something of Honolulu, where, on driving from the wharf, we were startled and amused by the knowledge of vernacular English displayed by the dark brown Hawaiian driver. My wife and I had been talking freely in the belief that he did not understand us, when, on my asking her the time, he suddenly turned round and said, "Dunno; I left my turnip at home!" Some Hawaiian ladies passed us, riding astride on their horses, with their habits hanging down on either side—a strange but not ungraceful sight.

After leaving Honolulu the sea, which had previously been very rough, became comparatively calm, and the Pacific, in that portion of it best known to early navigators, thoroughly justified its name. Becoming accustomed to the gentle rolling of the ship, I was for the first time able to appreciate what to good sailors may be the pleasure of the sea. Lying on our chairs on the deck at night, with a balmy breeze tempering the tropical heat, it was a matter of special interest to watch the gradual verging towards the horizon of the stars of the Northern Hemisphere with the corresponding rise of the Southern Cross, its bright "pointers" Alpha and Beta Centauri, and the other con-

own personal observation, that there is a rogue-whale of no commercial value which has a fin such as you describe. It lies on the surface in calm weather and throws up the fin vertically at intervals, bringing it down again with a tremendous smack, which can be heard a mile off, throwing up tons of water and giving the appearance of an attack from another fish. Since I saw this one that calm day near Koro (Fiji) I have never believed in the thresher."

stellations of the southern sky. But on the night when, after crossing the line, the Pole Star was no longer visible, it seemed as if we were losing a familiar friend. One evening we saw a sky which, by its remarkable contrast of exceeding blackness in the clouds and bright golden yellow in a great gap between them, recalled Millais' picture of "The Sower,"[1] which I had previously regarded as imaginative in this as well as other respects.

At Auckland we dropped several passengers, including Lord Ronald Gower, and on the way thence to Sydney we came in for the edge of a hurricane. For some two hours, immediately after a dead calm, the wind blew in terrific fashion, and the sea ran very high. It was hardly consoling to hear from a sailor that if we shipped a "green sea," which seemed likely, it would probably sweep away the deck-houses in which were our cabins. I had just determined to take my wife below, when the wind ceased as suddenly as it arose.

As we entered the harbour of Sydney, we were boarded by the Health Officer. This gentleman, no doubt ordinarily competent, appeared on this occasion to be *non compos*. The passengers were ranged in a row for examination; he passed me without notice, but coming to my wife, caused her to bare her arm, presumably to find the vaccination marks. Not apparently satisfied, he asked, "Have you been vaccinated?" And when she answered, "Yes," replied, "That will do," and passed on. But this was not all. The crew of his own boat ranged themselves with the passengers for inspection. They were each examined, to their great delight and to the general amusement, this marvellous doctor being entirely innocent of their identity and unconscious of the cause of laughter.

At Sydney we were hospitably entertained by Mrs. Hoskins, wife of the Commodore of the station, in her husband's absence, and the same evening we embarked on the steamship *Wentworth* bound for Levuka, Fiji.

[1] This picture belonged to my father-in-law.

An exceedingly rough sea kept us for the most part below decks, where smells were even more than usually varied and noisome. Apparently for a long time previously no attention had been paid to cleanliness, and though a spasmodic effort had been made towards improvement in our cabins, there were corners even in them with sufficient dirt to grow mustard and cress. Until I had in recent years made passages on the London and South Western steamers running between Southampton and St. Malo, I could have said with truth that this was the dirtiest vessel on which it had ever been my lot to travel. Subsequent voyages on other steamers of the Australasian S. N. Company showed decided improvement in this respect, but none of them were at all equal in cleanliness to the vessels of the New Zealand Company, which were always models of comfort, and had installed in them electric light long before it had come into general use on English passenger steamers.

To add to our discomfort we were kept awake night after night by a squalling baby. On one occasion, after several hours of this music, my wife—though herself very unwell from the heavy rolling of the ship—got up and went for the purpose of rendering assistance. She found the infant in want of food and otherwise in a terrible state of neglect, the unnatural mother making not the slightest effort towards relief and showing surprise that anyone else should do so. In the course of a quarter of an hour my wife had procured the necessary food and succeeded in appeasing the unfortunate child, earning thereby the gratitude of the rest of the passengers.

We passed close to Norfolk Island, but otherwise saw no land until we entered the Fiji group. The view of the island of Ovalau, as we entered the passage through the barrier reef with its long, irregular outline of mountains and the little town of Levuka nestling at their base, struck us as of exceptional beauty; but I refrain from describing what has been so well described by others.

As soon as we were at anchor there came on board to

greet us Mr. Arthur Gordon, the Governor's private secretary, whom I had known and liked so much in Trinidad, and Captain Knollys, A.D.C. They took us ashore in the Governor's barge, a fine boat manned by sixteen Fijians dressed in a boating livery devised by Sir Arthur, consisting of white short-sleeved jackets and sulus—a kind of Fijian kilt—bordered with Turkey red, which looked extremely well against their brown skins.

"As we watched them rowing towards us," my wife wrote at the time, "a prettier combination of colour could hardly be seen. For the sea, indigo-blue outside the reef, is, over it, of every imaginable shade of green, to which the red in the men's uniforms made an agreeable relief." In the same letter my wife continues: "We were only a few minutes getting from the steamer to the jetty; and it was delightful, in setting foot on shore, to feel that after our three and a half months' travelling we were really at the end of our journey. For from this little pier you walk straight into Government House. Sir Arthur was waiting in the gallery to receive us, and William walked on quickly to meet him. But Harry and I, in charge of Mr. Gordon, went much more sedately, the cause being my unsteadiness on *terra firma*. After all my voyaging, I could have gone quicker if the wharf had been rolling about. The only one of us who was not delighted at landing was Harry, who had become thoroughly attached to the sea. He had a fit of crying on leaving the boat, and the wild appearance of the native guard, who were drawn up in front of Government House, proved far from consolatory, causing another deluge.

"Nothing could be nicer, kinder, and warmer than the Gordons' reception of us, and we were at once made thoroughly at home."

The house which was to be our home for eighteen months, and also for a further year and a half when I returned to Fiji as Governor, has been already described in Miss Gordon Cumming's attractive book, *At Home in Fiji;* but, as regards its surrounding "amenities," it had been much

improved after her departure. The main building had been constructed by the European Government of King Thakombau, part being used for the meetings of his Parliament and the remainder as Government offices. To this had been added by Sir Arthur Gordon, at his own expense, a wing and outhouses necessary for civilised residence. The roof was of thatch, and, except as regards Sir Arthur's additions, both outer and partition walls were of reeds. The buildings were almost entirely surrounded by verandahs, the posts of which were covered with beautiful creepers. These, together with fine clumps of variegated crotons planted by Sir Arthur, gave an additional element of beauty to a house in itself picturesque. The materials of construction afforded a refuge for noxious insects; but in most other respects the house was an ideal one for tropical residence. There were no fine rooms with elaborately decorated ceilings such as we had left in Trinidad, but it was all on one floor — a great consideration in a hot climate—and there was accommodation for a proper establishment of servants, such as was there almost entirely wanting. As my wife puts it in one of her letters: "You can see that the house has been designed, and its arrangements settled, by one who knew the requirements of a suitable establishment. There is thus far more comfort than in the Trinidad house, where magnificence only was kept in mind and accommodation for the people to be in character with it was entirely forgotten or ignored."

On the Queen's birthday, which was celebrated the day after our arrival, there was a dinner to which some fifty people sat down, all men except Lady Gordon and my wife. After a cordial response had been given to the loyal toast of the day, Sir Arthur proposed my health in far too complimentary terms, saying that I was the man of all others he would have chosen for carrying on his work. What, however, had for me the principal interest of the day was the part taken in the celebration by the natives. I copy the account of what occurred from one of my wife's letters:—

NASOVA

(PART OF FRONT)

I. *Face p.* 332

"In the afternoon several chiefs came with their retainers, and each party separately performed a dance on the 'rara,' that being the native name for a large level space covered with grass close to the house, and somewhat resembling an English village green. We all went out to watch, and I never before saw so curious a sight. The only thing I can think of in the least approaching it is perhaps a scene in a pantomime where wild men appear with horribly painted faces and got up in leaves, etc. Imagine this, and then you may be able to picture the bad description I am going to attempt. While we were waiting for the chiefs, groups of Fijian women were settling themselves on the grass, and very picturesque they looked with bright-coloured flowers in their hair, put in one by one, for the most part over the ears and on the top of the head. Presently a fine and rather pretty-looking young woman came towards us. This was the wife of the ex-king's son. Such ladies are rightly treated with special respect by the Governor and Lady Gordon. So an A.D.C. was sent to ask her to come and sit by us, and she at once came with her three ladies-in-waiting. I was introduced, and she shook hands, sitting down on the ground for a talk, which naturally consisted only of signs, though we were able to convey thus more than might be imagined. She made a careful examination of my clothes, saying 'Vinaka' (which expresses approval) to each. Also I let her try on my rings and bangles, at which she was highly pleased. The wife of a chief is a very great personage, and is most distant to those beneath her. The ladies-in-waiting are treated with supreme indifference, and never walk or sit but behind their mistress. The right thing is not to speak to them, and though much wishing to do so and to shake hands with them also, I was obliged to refrain, as I was told this would give great offence. Soon up came a party of dancers, the chief walking in front and his men in single file behind him. The chief sat down near us and his followers defiled in front of the Governor's chair, each of them as he passed

depositing on the ground a yam or a sugar cane, this being the native way of expressing respect and goodwill. All were got up in their best, and curious objects they looked. Their faces, which in general are nice-looking, were disfigured with paint, some having daubed their noses red and the rest of the face black, while others had smeared the black dye over the whole countenance as well as the neck and shoulders, with a yellow patch here and there, two or three apparently regarding a yellow eye and nose as their ideal of beauty. Their heads were all bound round with 'tappa,' the native cloth (made, I am told, from the bark of the paper mulberry), either entirely white or in striking patterns of black, white, and brown. The upper part of the body was generally bare, dyes only taking the place of clothing, though in a few cases they had around them wreaths of red leaves. The 'sulu,' or native kilt, was of tappa, with wreathed leaves forming a kind of overskirt. Some of the men were girt round over their sulus by many layers of this material, so that they were 'bunched out' as though they had on huge crinolines. They are evidently very proud of themselves in this holiday gear; but to me it was painful to observe that such a fine, noble-looking people, whose faces are ordinarily full of expression and intelligence, should still be such savages at bottom.[1]

"The dance began with about forty forming in a row, perhaps twenty standing behind them in a circle, in the middle of which was the leader. The men in this circle were the band, which gave time to the dancers in front by regular hand-clapping and the singing of a melancholy wail which was far from suggesting life or movement. Gradually the dancing began, the dancers joining in the wail. The dancing consisted of very slow move-

[1] It is with a view not to ornament, but to disguise, that this painting of the face was practised. A man so tricked out is almost wholly unrecognisable, and the private feuds which would have resulted from hostile encounters between tribes, had any man been killed by another known man, were thus to a great extent avoided.

ments, giving the impression that some solemn play was being acted.[1] The men continually bowed to one another, and went through all imaginable gestures, the song never ceasing and never getting out of the wail. Occasionally they clapped their hands together in such perfect time that the sound made by all seemed as one. Each dance took about a quarter of an hour, one party succeeding another, and being supposed to do something different from the rest, though all appeared to me much the same, the sight after a time becoming very monotonous. Quick dances, I am told, are much more amusing, but are not considered quite so respectful; so we saw none. The audience never applauded, and preserved a dead silence, which was only now and then broken by a cry of 'Vinaka!' from the Governor's native A.D.C., which was intended to signify the Governor's approval.

"Lady Gordon goes to church carried by six men; and as I am unfortunately not strong enough to walk and sit through the service, I suppose I shall have to do the same, as it is considered improper here to be seen in church in a habit. But as one has to go right through the town, it requires some nerve to face the ordeal."

Sir Arthur Gordon had determined before my arrival to remain a month in the colony afterwards, in order to "post me up" in his policy and to make me acquainted with the unprecedented conditions under which government had to be conducted. It was fortunate that he did so; for, as usual, I was much exhausted by the long voyage, and for a time so ill that it was doubtful whether his departure would not have to be further postponed. However, by the end of three weeks I was sufficiently recovered to undertake the administration, and the Gordons were able to leave at the time originally appointed.

Before the Gordons left there was a meeting of native chiefs, who came expressly from all parts of the colony for the purpose of taking leave of the Governor and of

[1] As it was.

installing me as their new head chief. The ceremony took place in the native "bure," which had been constructed specially for such functions in the immediate vicinity of Government House. The chief part of it consisted of a "yagona" (kava) drinking, which is a necessary element of all Fijian solemnities. I cannot improve on the description given of this proceeding which has been given by Miss Gordon Cumming and other travellers; and so I will merely mention that when I drank of the cup presented to me, all the chiefs present gave a loud "tama," the peculiar sign of respect shown by all Fijians to a superior, the example being set by the ex-king Thakombau (then officially styled by the native title Vunivalu), who on this, as on all other occasions up to the time of his death, seized every opportunity of showing his loyalty to the new régime.

Thakombau was in many respects a most remarkable man. He was the son of Tanoa, one of the most savage chiefs of a savage country, whose barbarous cruelty, as described by many writers, was almost beyond belief. His youth was passed at a time when the introduction of guns by escaped Australian convicts had largely increased the taste for cannibalistic food by affording so ready a means of gratifying it. For, when during the thirties of the last century Fiji first became known to the civilised world, the numbers of men who were being killed and eaten were such that it is impossible to suppose such a rate of destruction to have been of long continuance. I am strongly inclined to think that before the islands were visited by white men the eating of human flesh was a comparative rarity. Intertribal wars were perhaps as frequent, but they were not, in so far as I could gather, very deadly. The fighting was of a very cautious character, and the numbers actually killed were probably few. A general mêlée between two tribes, if it ever occurred at all, was of very rare occurrence. Men were, as a rule, not killed in fair fighting, but were surprised and clubbed, often by an enemy creeping up behind; and when two or three bodies were secured in this

way, the slayers would retire and celebrate a victory. The eating of the slain followed as an additional means of triumphing over and insulting an enemy, and it is doubtful whether there was then any special taste for this kind of food. The introduction of guns, however, undoubtedly rendered the latter motive the stronger. The new weapons so largely increased the number of victims that the cannibal habit, constantly practised, quickly created a craving for its indulgence at any cost. So when the early missionaries reached Fiji, the chiefs had come to prefer human flesh to any other food, and were so anxious to provide it for visitors that they sometimes winked at the killing of their own or friendly people, when their larder was insufficiently supplied with dead enemies.

But however this may have been, we know that from very early in his boyhood, and probably from the time when at six years old he was made to club another boy, Thakombau had eaten "bokola" (human meat), and that he continued the practice until he was nearly fifty years old, when he became Christian. Considering the large supply of bokola which was maintained by his father, and also by himself up to the period mentioned, and that the supreme chief was always offered a portion of every roasted victim, I do not consider improbable the estimate I have heard that he had in his lifetime eaten portions of more than a thousand human bodies.

And yet here was a man for whom I had a very high respect—a feeling which had been previously entertained by Sir Arthur Gordon, and in fact was shared by every educated European who had the opportunity of knowing him, with the possible exception of those whose schemes he had thwarted for exploiting the services of his people. I always found him wise in counsel, just in decision, and loyal in speech and action. He had, moreover, an indescribable dignity and a manner indicative of mingled pride and courtesy, which was shared more or less by all the high chiefs, while his bearing towards children was such

as to immediately win their hearts. My own respect gradually ripened almost into affection, and when he died a few years afterwards, during my second administration of the colony, I mourned for him as a valued friend.[1] He, as well as most of the other high chiefs, was frequently at our table, where his behaviour was unexceptionable. Though, of course, unaccustomed to the European mode of eating and drinking, his tact was such, and his perception so rapid, that he committed no solecisms, and but for an occasional hint from the native attendant behind his chair, no one could detect that he was undergoing an unfamiliar ordeal. Only once in the many times he dined with us was there a slight hitch in the proceedings. He had taken on his plate some pine-apple ice, and his attendant, unaware of its nature himself, not warning him, he put a spoonful into his mouth. The effect was no doubt startling to an unaccustomed palate, and what followed reminded me of the similar case of Dr. Johnson, when he ejected a mouthful of scalding liquid with the remark, "A fool would have swallowed it." Thakombau, however, made no allusion to the mishap; he maintained his usual matchless imperturbability, and, while his attendant mended matters with a clean napkin, continued the conversation in which we were engaged.

Though nearly all of the great chiefs were in different ways remarkable, I will merely refer to one other who was specially distinguished. Maafu was at the time of my arrival a Government officer. He was Roko Tui Lau; Roko Tui being the title of the native Sub-Governors appointed to rule provinces and Lau being the most eastern

[1] My friend Mr. Victor Williamson, C.M.G., after reading this description of the ex-King, writes of him as follows: "It may possibly seem an exaggeration to write of Thakombau as one of 'the great men of whom the world knows little,' but it is impossible to exaggerate the debt which the British Empire owes to the unswerving loyalty to this old man, of whom probably 999 out of every 1,000 Englishmen have never heard. Had he not invariably gone 'straight,' and had he joined in intrigues to embarrass the Government, Fiji might have easily proved such a thorn in its side as would have made England rue the day of its annexation as a British colony." I heartily subscribe to this view.

THAKOMBAU

(EX-KING, STYLED THE VUNIVALU)

I.—*Face p.* 3

province which comprised many islands, none of them nearer to the seat of government than one hundred miles and some nearly two hundred miles away. He was by birth a prince of Tonga, the kingdom of the Friendly Isles, situated some four hundred miles to the south-east of Fiji. The Lau group had been largely recruited by immigrants from Tonga, and there was to be observed there more than anywhere else in Fiji the mixture of blood between the light-coloured Polynesian and the Melanesian, which is characteristic of most of the natives in the colony, the darker strain being specially marked in the western portion of the group as being nearest to the Melanesian Archipelago.

The people of Lau, after the example of their kin in Tonga, had been the first to become Christian, and Maafu, having made them subject to him, became the recognised leader of the Christian forces in their wars against those who had not accepted the "lotu," by which name the new religion was generally known. His success in this position seems to have stimulated a naturally ambitious character, and latterly rendered him indifferent to the religion of those who stood in the way of the desired increase of his power. So, though Thakombau had for many years become Christian also, Maafu was preparing to attack him, and would in all probability have succeeded in becoming master of the whole of Fiji, but for the advent of British government. Though on the whole I liked the Fijians better, the Tongans were manifestly both in body and mind a superior race, and I am inclined to think that most of the Fijians who were foremost physically and intellectually had more or less of Tongan blood in their veins, as we know to have been the case with several of the chiefs.

Maafu was in appearance a magnificent man, with a finer physique even than that of Thakombau, who was himself distinguished in this respect; and though they were probably equal in shrewdness and natural capacity, Maafu had a more furnished mind. Living at a greater distance from

me and thus being more rarely seen, Maafu was less known to me than the Vunivalu. I was satisfied, however, that he was equally loyal, which was all the more creditable, because while the British power saved Thakombau from probable annihilation, Maafu's ambition was thwarted just when it was on the point of gaining its object. Though not a cannibal, he was probably as cruel as those who had been, if the stories told of him were true. Once it was said when he was general of the so-called Christian army and had taken a number of "heathen" prisoners, he and his "Mata-ni-vanua" (aide-de-camp) clubbed the whole of them while bound and helpless. When one reflects upon innumerable occurrences in Europe after many centuries of Christianity, it is scarcely to be wondered at that a comparatively recent convert should not at once abandon a practice, however cruel, sanctioned by immemorial usage. In fact it is wonderful that Thakombau should, on receiving the lotu (Christianity), have at once given up entirely all his savage practices, though from having been so inveterate a cannibal he might naturally be supposed to be the more cruel of the two. On one occasion when I asked a Fijian chief the truth of a story of cruelty, he replied, "And did not Samuel hew Agag in pieces before the Lord?"—which did not lessen my conviction that the unrestricted reading of the Bible, at least the Old Testament, by the uneducated is not of unmixed advantage.

The following incident, related to me by Sir Arthur Gordon, illustrates at once Maafu's shrewdness and strength of character:—

"On one of the Lau islands, Matuku, a sort of religious frenzy had seized the people in consequence of the pretensions of certain persons (three or four men and one woman) to have received from heaven a special revelation which constituted them angels. In that capacity these people were issuing orders of all kinds to the simple and credulous islanders, none of whom, except the native schoolmaster and his wife, seemed to have thought of questioning the

authenticity of the revelation. A very serious state of things might have resulted, for had these proceedings been allowed to go on unchecked a superstition would probably have grown up presenting similar features to Hauhauism, in New Zealand, and with the same pernicious effect. Happily Maafu put an end quickly to any such danger. Hearing of the sensation thus caused in Matuku and the neighbouring islands, he at once went off in his English-built yacht, the *Xarifa*, to the centre of disturbance. The angels, being summoned, appeared before him in the local court-house, one of them, the woman, having a baby in her arms. Thereupon Maafu said, 'I will take the case of the female angel first,' thus intentionally causing a laugh among the audience. He began very politely, 'That's a fine baby you have there; is it your own?" Reply: 'Yes.' 'Are you married?' 'Yes.' This answer disappointed Maafu, who had intended, if she were unmarried, to point out the incongruity of the character of an angel with a breach of the moral law. Immediately, however, he took another tack. 'So you are married and fancy yourself an angel?' Reply: 'I know I am one. It has been revealed to me.' Maafu: 'Pooh, my good woman, you have quite mistaken your vocation. Can you read?' Reply: 'Yes.' Maafu: 'Very well, go home, then, with that child of yours and read the twenty-second chapter of St. Matthew. You will see there that angels neither marry nor are given in marriage. You can't be an angel.' When the general laughter caused by the decision had subsided, Maafu, with a fatherly air, said: 'There, let her go away and take good care of that baby.' Then he turned to the men and said: 'As I came down in the *Xarifa* I looked over the laws, and as I find nothing there about the personation of angels, I dismiss the case against you.' The men, well pleased, were beginning to get up from the floor, where they were sitting in the attitude of respect, when Maafu thundered out, 'Stop a bit; there is no law about angels, but there are some about obtaining money under false pretences. That is what

you have been doing for the last two months. Your sentence is to work six months upon the roads in Loma Loma. Off with you to the schooner.' Thus was the angelic craze suppressed, never to appear again, by a judicious mixture of ridicule and severity."

CHAPTER II

Visit to chief's house—A princess—Chiefs' dignity and good manners—State of colony—Poll-tax: its evil effects; replaced by produce-tax—Sir Arthur Gordon had pacified natives, but whites still discontented—Size of colony: common notion of it dispelled—I assume administration—Memorial of missionaries—Its publication—Find their complaints groundless—My reply—Singular method of rejoinder—My final decision unanswered, and confirmed by Secretary of State—The High Commission—Appointment of Chief Justice as Acting High Commissioner—Incongruity of two offices—Difficulties thereby caused—Chief Justice's intention to visit New Guinea happily not carried out—The *Stormbird* incident—Chief Justice threatens gaol delivery of convicted prisoners; with difficulty dissuade him—Departure of Royal Engineers—Unique position of Government; dependent solely upon native loyalty—Necessity for careful scrutiny of reports—Anxiety caused and quickly allayed—Land claims and their difficulties—Sir Arthur Gordon's remarkable work.

ONE of Thakombau's sons, Ratu Timoci,[1] being Roko Tui of Loma Viti, the province which included Ovalau and a number of other neighbouring islands, lived at the native village of Draimba, within a short walk of Nasova, so that we saw much of him and his wife. Here is an extract from my wife's account of our first visit to them on July 10th, shortly after the Gordons' departure. "We had sent word beforehand to say we were coming, and so they had their best house ready for us. The house is native-built, the whole of the exterior walls and roof being of thatch. You enter by a very small door, which only admits one at a time. Ratu Timothy was in the house to receive us, and handed me to a sofa which he had procured for us to sit on; for natives of all ranks always squat on the floor, and any article of furniture for sitting upon is

[1] Ratu and Andi are the appellations to which are entitled respectively all men and women who are well-born. These may be termed the patricians, as opposed to the plebeians (Kai-si).

unknown in their houses. After making use of the sofa for a few moments, by way of acknowledgment of their thoughtfulness, we, in order to put our entertainers more at their ease, took to the floor ourselves, saying (what was quite true), that we preferred it, for a soft, yielding floor makes a chair an uncomfortable seat. The mats were beautifully clean, soft, and springy, there being several layers of them lying upon a thick underbed of coconut fibre, quite delightful to sit upon, and very tempting to sleep on. Presently Ratu Timoci's wife came in and, after shaking hands, put herself on the floor beside her husband. Rarely have I seen a handsomer pair. He is tall and well made, with an exceedingly benignant face, and looks particularly well in the native dress, which they keep to here. She is a Tongan, of a light olive-brown colour, not very tall, and, perhaps, according to our taste (which is not that of the South Pacific), a little too fat, but having beautiful eyes and a most fascinating smile. Her dress was simply a tappa sulu put tightly round her and falling just below the knee. For upper garment she had simply a red-and-white plaid, made exceedingly full, and hanging like a curtain round her. This part of the dress comes of missionary teaching, and they rarely go out without it, though I do not fancy that, except on state occasions, they ever wear it in their homes; for they seem awkward and uncomfortable in it, seldom putting their arms into the sleeves, so that it hangs about them somewhat untidily. The visit, after a short time, would have become tedious, but for the novelty of the scene and the strange structure of the house, so utterly different from what we had ever seen before." (Here follows a description of the house, much like what may be read in Miss Gordon Cumming's and other books.) "The Ratu and his wife parted with us with much cordiality, being evidently much pleased; and we were also glad to observe in another instance a dignity, courtesy, and intelligence which removes these people to an immeasurable distance above what is the ordinary idea of savages." In this, as

in all my subsequent visits to native chiefs, they furnished an example in good manners which might be imitated with advantage by many people considering themselves vastly superior to the highest Fijian.

Before beginning the account of my administration of Fiji, I may as well give a short sketch of the state of the colony at my arrival.

When Sir Arthur Gordon reached Fiji, some three years before, he had, indeed, a difficult task before him. Some 40,000 of the natives, or more than a third of the whole population, had just perished of measles, and the depression under which the people were suffering on this account was increased by a system of taxation (as entirely repugnant to native feeling as it was to principles of justice) which had been devised not merely for revenue, the ordinary object of such taxation, but to provide the planters with a supply of forced labour. A head-tax of £1 per annum had been placed upon all male adult natives with the full knowledge that the greater part of them would be able to pay it only in one way, viz. by obtaining advances from employers of labour in return for contracts of service. This system was in Fiji even less justifiable than it would be now in Africa, because the African native population tends to increase, while that of Fiji, apart from the loss by pestilence, was showing signs of diminution in the presence of the white man—a process which the separation from their homes for long periods of a large proportion of the young men was certain to accelerate by decreasing births as well as increasing deaths.

The white population of the group was scarcely less depressed. The favourable conditions of the islands, as regards soil and climate, for the growth of all tropical produce, and the high market price of cotton caused by the American Civil War, had attracted a large number of settlers who had commenced planting, most of them with very little capital and with even less knowledge of agriculture. The falling markets which followed peace brought

disaster, from which the cheap forced labour provided by Thakombau's Europeanised Government had failed to save them. Then, again, the Europeans were laying claim to over a thousand tracts of land, many of which the natives declared had been acquired from the wrong owners, and nearly all of which were in extent larger, some enormously larger, than intended by the grantors; these opposing contentions demanding rigid investigation and just decision as the only security for future peace. Hence discontent, openly expressed by the whites, but on the part of the natives for the most part silent and sullen. Moreover, the mountaineers of Viti Levu (the largest island, about equal in size to Jamaica), who had never been conquered by Thakombau, though they had tendered their submission to British rule, showed this to be only nominal, and in contempt for outside authority committed savage outrages upon some of the coast towns.

In addition to these unpromising conditions, in 1875 the Treasury was empty, and the Governor's only means of initiating the new British régime was by drawing upon a credit of £100,000, which had been conceded by Her Majesty's Government. I mention at once with regard to this subsidy that it was considerably less than France has during the whole of the last century spent *annually* upon the single island of Martinique, with an area of land some thirty times less than that of Fiji. Yet though it was considerably exceeded in amount by the sum required to settle debts incurred before the cession, it was the last as well as the first pecuniary assistance[1] conceded to this new colony. The insufficiency of this subsidy was at once recognised by all those immediately connected with the administration, it being clear to them that more liberal assistance at the outset would make all the difference as regards future prosperity.

Nothing, of course, could be afforded for troops from outside. A company of Royal Engineers had, indeed, been

[1] It was not even a "grant-in-aid," but an advance expected to be repaid.

sent for the purpose of constructing such works as were absolutely necessary for the commencement of civilised government. But they, distributed in very small bodies upon different islands, could be of no use for any purpose other than their proper work ; and so for the maintenance of order Sir Arthur was compelled to rely entirely upon the natives themselves. It is to his lasting credit that by his sympathetic dealing with them and his wise and just measures he so quickly gained their confidence that for this purpose they proved amply sufficient. Under a few white officers native police proved to be all that was required for ordinary circumstances ; while the armed Native Constabulary, some of whom usually took the part of the Governor's Guard, showed themselves to be an efficient nucleus for the native levées which Sir Arthur (taking the responsibility of rejecting military advice to await reinforcement from outside) used exclusively for subduing and punishing for their outrages the mountaineers of Viti Levu.

Sir Arthur Gordon at once saw the evil effect of the poll-tax. He recognised it as certain to produce disaffection among the natives, as well as conducing to their rapid extinction. But to find a substitute for it by which the natives could contribute to the revenue was difficult. The solution which he devised was a system of payment in produce, the cultivation of which was to be carried on by the people under their own chiefs. The amount in money, to which the contribution of each province was required to be equivalent in value, was fixed by the Governor in Council, any surplus realised beyond this sum being returned to the contributing province. This system, however objectionable it may seem in principle, was admirably adapted to suit native prejudices, and I do not hesitate to say that no other could have brought an equal amount to the Treasury without danger to the peace of the colony and without complete disregard of what was due to those who had voluntarily ceded their country in return for a promise of protection. The financial result of this system had been remarkable.

In addition to large sums returned each year to provinces whose contributions had realised more than the amount required of them, the receipts of the colonial Treasury from these sources were £9,343 in 1876, £15,103 in 1877, and promised to be still greater in 1878, the year of my arrival. They eventually proved to be over £18,000. Considering that the total native population was under 110,000 and that a considerable number of these were mountaineers who had not yet been subjected to taxation, the last sum must have nearly approached £1 a head of the male population of an age and in a condition of labour, and was far more than had ever been raised by Thakombau's Government, or could have been obtained in any case from the superseded system which had caused so much friction and natural discontent.

While Sir Arthur had worked unceasingly for the benefit of all classes of the population, and had succeeded in fully satisfying the natives, the white people at the time of my arrival still remained for the most part in a state of depression and discontent. Great efforts had been made with considerable success to obtain for them adequate supplies of cheap labour from the Melanesian islands, while arrangements had been concluded for immigration from India. In fact, all possible had been done for the planters, who nevertheless were complaining bitterly of Government discouragement of Fijian engagements at a distance from their homes. Subsequent experience, however, convinced me that want of capital and the market conditions would have precluded success on the part of most of the planters, even if all the available labour in the colony had been exploited for their benefit, in utter disregard of the native welfare.

The following, extracted from one of my official reports, gives an idea of the area of the colony :—

"Owing to the small scale of the maps in use, the dimensions of Fiji are but little known. Even educated people would seem sometimes to regard it as about equal in this respect to the Channel or Scilly Islands, and to believe that a large portion of it may be

visited in an afternoon's sail. It will therefore be a surprise to many to know that a line drawn round the extremities of the colony would describe a figure of which the shortest diameter would be over two hundred and sixty miles in length, the longest over three hundred and seventy miles,[1] and that a steam vessel passing over this line at a rate of ten miles an hour would occupy little less than five days and nights in the voyage. It would surprise them still further to learn that of the eighty or more inhabited islands enclosed by this line one is about as large as Jamaica and considerably larger than Cyprus, that a second would contain Mauritius three times and Barbados ten times, and that the aggregate area of the whole is greater than that of all the British West India Islands, excluding the Bahamas."

Soon after taking the reins of government I was forced into a controversy with the chief local representatives of the Australian Wesleyan Missionary Society. This Society had had the principal part in the conversion of the Fijians. It had almost sole charge of the native education, and though its power had been somewhat curtailed by the advent of civil government, yet by means of an organisation extending to every village in the colony it still retained, and deserved, great influence. Such a controversy, therefore, was entered upon reluctantly; but the circumstances left me no option in the matter. A memorial was addressed to me, with the request to forward it to England, stating, at considerable length, grounds of complaint against decisions of Sir Arthur Gordon in Council, by which the Society had been deprived of foreshore and other portions of the land claimed on its behalf. As these decisions were at that time by law final, I had no power of granting redress, even if complaint against them was just, and under ordinary circumstances I should have saved myself further trouble in the matter by forwarding the memorial to the Secretary of State together with all information obtainable on the subject. This course was, however, precluded by its publication in the local newspaper

[1] About six hundred miles since the British flag was hoisted in Rotumah.

immediately after its presentation to me. The Mission representatives thus figured as protagonists in the agitation of the dissatisfied land-claimants. It was evidently important to detach, if possible, this powerful body from the ranks of the discontented.

After a long and careful investigation, involving the examination of many documents, I became convinced that the impugned decisions were not only not unjust but extremely liberal to the Society, and in an exhaustive minute I gave my reasons for this opinion. My object was, however, not attained. The Society's representative disputed my conclusions by questioning the accuracy of some of the principal facts upon which they were based. It was therefore necessary for me to establish these facts, which I did so completely that my minute on the subject never received any reply.

An incident of this controversy was sufficiently remarkable to deserve notice. The exceedingly elaborate reply to my first minute was delivered to me at night after I had gone to bed, the English mail, which was then monthly, having just closed. This reply occupied thirteen pages of a printed pamphlet, and I had reason to believe that many copies of this *ex parte* presentment were sent away by steamer to England as well as to Australia, thus tending to create beliefs which it would take a month to dissipate. The course adopted was so improper that it deserved a severe rebuke; but, for the sake of peace, I contented myself in my final minute with the following moderate language:—

"The letter referred to in this minute will, as requested, be forwarded to the Secretary of State by the first opportunity. I did not forward it by the steamer which left early on the morning of the 20th inst., because it only reached me at 9.50 the previous night, after the English mail was closed—a late delivery which is the more to be regretted from the fact that the letter had already been printed in a pamphlet, together with the memorial and my former

minute, and thus appears as the close of a correspondence which was in fact incomplete."

I was much urged to publish this correspondence, but as some points in it were not altogether creditable to recent employees of the Mission, I refrained out of consideration for a Society to which Fiji was so much indebted.

I may add here that the Secretary of State approved of my part of the controversy and of my reasons for taking it; but in view of the many complaints against the land decisions of the Governor in Council, Sir Arthur Gordon, while in England, to show that he did not fear further investigation, approved of the creation of a Court of Rehearing, in which the Executive Council would be assisted by the Chief Justice, the Commissioner of Native Affairs, and a legal commissioner sent out from England for the purpose. This court, presided over by Sir Arthur Gordon, subsequently granted to the Mission all the land originally claimed—of right as regards such part of it as was not upon the sea (in view of deeds which were brought forward for the first time, and had previously for some mysterious reason been kept back), and *ex gratiâ* as regards such part as was foreshore, probably with a view to conciliate a powerful body who might much obstruct his native policy. If this was his object it was not attained, and I am inclined to think that he had reason afterwards to repent of his generosity.

Shortly before Sir Arthur Gordon's departure there occurred a serious outbreak of savagery in Vitu Levu, the largest island of the group. A band of men, pretending that they had the authority of the Roko Tui, entered a mountain town in the province of Ra, and having secured the men, ravished the women and committed other atrocities—the affair being, in fact, a recurrence of some of the worst features of savage warfare. The Provincial Court, presided over by the stipendiary magistrate of the district, had tried the prisoners charged with this offence and sentenced them to long terms of imprisonment with hard

labour, the ringleaders to receive a flogging in addition. This proceeding was, of course, technically wrong, the grave crimes committed being such as were properly within the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court alone. But the charges actually tried were within the jurisdiction of the Lower Court, and the sentences were not heavier than could be legally awarded. And so when the report of the case came before me, after full consideration of the circumstances, I approved of the magistrate's action, and justified it to the Secretary of State. Lawlessness of this kind would be apt to be contagious among a people who had not yet by any means divested themselves of savage instincts, and in order to prevent it from spreading it was all-important that punishment for such crimes should be immediate and certain. A trial by the Supreme Court would have involved considerable delay, and owing to the great number of witnesses, much expense which the Treasury could but ill afford. Moreover, my experience in Guiana and elsewhere had taught me that failure of justice is at least highly probable where the proof of crimes is dependent upon the evidence of natives, who, awed by the unaccustomed surroundings of a high court, can be frightened into saying anything desired by a defending counsel. On these and other grounds the course taken by the magistrate was the right one in the interest of the colony.

When the Chief Justice heard of this case and my approval of what had been done, he wrote me a strong letter on the subject, and there ensued a correspondence which caused me much anxiety, as it was only with much difficulty that I succeeded in dissuading him from proceedings which would have caused a grave scandal, as making public a serious difference between the Executive and Judicial Departments of the Service. Even when he had abandoned, in consequence of my remonstrances, the still more objectionable course which he had at first threatened, he informed me that he should proceed to deliver the gaols of the prisoners as being in his opinion illegally convicted. After

persuasion on this point had failed, I was compelled to tell him that I should be obliged to prevent any such proceeding by force, at the same time pointing out that "gaol delivery" had no concern with convicted prisoners, and that an attempt to apply it to such had been the principal ground for the removal of a judge from the bench of another colony by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

I was not altogether without apprehension as to the view which might be taken by the Secretary of State, and I was therefore relieved to hear that my action, being supported by Sir Arthur Gordon, received his full approval.

In connection with this case I may mention that, owing to considerations similar to those which had governed my action in it, the Secretary of State had some years before sent out the draft of a law, with instructions to pass it, by which the Governor was empowered to declare any district outside the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and to appoint special commissioners for the trial of offences committed within any districts so excluded. Under this law such exclusion had been applied to the mountain district of Viti Levu, where the people were still savages, and this case rendered me doubtful whether the same principle might not with advantage be applied to other parts of the colony.

Further difficulties were caused to me about the same time by the Chief Justice in consequence of action which he proposed to take in his capacity of Acting High Commissioner of the Western Pacific. The authority of the High Commissioner, in accordance with the Act of Parliament which created his office, at the time extended, as regards all British subjects, over all the islands, not within the jurisdiction of a civilised power, lying between the Society Islands in the east and Dutch New Guinea in the west, between New Zealand in the south and a boundary in the north which included the Carolines and the various groups commonly designated together with them as the Line Islands—the area thus comprised being greater than that occupied by the Russian Empire. As the proper exercise

of the authority thus vested in the High Commissioner might occasionally necessitate long voyages by sea, Sir Arthur Gordon, out of consideration for my unfortunate tendency to sea-sickness, had thought proper to delegate this portion of his functions to the Chief Justice., who thus, while subordinate to me as regards the government of Fiji, was in this respect independent, so that he could, without leave and at his own discretion, absent himself for indefinite periods in distant parts of the High Commission jurisdiction.

And so it happened that, in consequence of reports as to troubles in New Guinea between the natives and parties of prospectors, this official informed me that he had asked the Commodore for a ship-of-war to take him thither. Such a voyage would inevitably take many weeks, and might under easily conceivable circumstances occupy several months, during which time all proceedings in the Supreme Court of Fiji would be suspended. For the Chief Justice was sole judge, and there was no one else in the colony at all fitted to act in that capacity. Moreover, it was the unanimous opinion of those who were best acquainted with the Pacific that such a voyage on the part of the Chief Justice to New Guinea could not possibly do any good, and might easily cause difficulties with the Australian Governments, which were at that time by no means well affected towards the High Commission. For these reasons I did my best to dissuade him from his intention, being moved quite as much by imperial as by purely local considerations. But I began to fear that I was about to fail when there occurred the opportune arrival of Commodore Hoskins in the *Wolverene*. This experienced officer, when he learnt the circumstances, entirely agreed with my view, and was consequently averse from sending away a ship on such an expedition, as being incompatible with the proper provision for more important services required of his small squadron.

About the same time the Chief Justice intended other action which might have involved much more serious con-

sequences. He informed me that he was about to cause the seizure of a vessel called the *Stormbird*, then belonging to the Government of Hawaii, in consequence of irregularities in the recruitment of Melanesian labourers while recently under the British flag. Apart from her now foreign nationality, this vessel being in Levuka Harbour was not within the High Commission jurisdiction, and any responsibility for her seizure would therefore be mine. Without, however, irritating him by prematurely putting forward this fact, I succeeded, not without much difficulty, in convincing him that his contemplated action would be regarded as an international outrage, and not improbably lead to complications, not only with Hawaii, but with the United States, which power had already assumed something more than a sentimental interest in the affairs of that country.

As the official in question has since died under specially sad circumstances, I have touched upon these difficulties as lightly as possible. I should have been glad to omit mention of them altogether, but that the picture intended to be drawn of the varied responsibilities and anxieties of a governor's life would thereby suffer.

I have already said that the Government of Fiji was without any European troops for the maintenance of order. A company of Royal Engineers, with three officers, engaged in the construction of necessary works, was still in Fiji at my arrival. But I was apprised that if this force was to remain any longer, it must be at the expense of the colony. As the scanty funds at my command were insufficient, I reluctantly requested that this little force should be withdrawn. And so within a few months I had to depend exclusively upon the loyalty of the natives for the peace and security of the colony. I cannot say I was altogether without a tinge of anxiety when the Engineers embarked for England and were gone beyond recall. For though their number was too small and they were too much distributed to have any appreciable effect against

a general native rising, it was not easy for me to determine with certainty whether the mere presence of some of the Queen's troops had not had a moral effect in checking any tendency to disturbance. Sir Arthur Gordon's just, wise, and sympathetic government had operated favourably on most of the chiefs, but there were persistent reports that two of the Roko Tuis, Ratu Epeli, the eldest son of Thakombau, and Tui Thakau, the autocratic chief of the island of Taviuni, were disaffected. The position was one with respect to which I could hardly avoid feeling a weight of responsibility; and, indeed, for that position it would be difficult to find a parallel in the history of the British or any other empire. For as the mail steamer then arrived only once a month, if a disturbance occurred immediately after her departure, it would have been impossible to obtain assistance from New Zealand or Australia in less than six weeks, and during all that time the white population, of under 4,000, sparsely scattered through many islands, might be almost at the mercy of the 120,000 natives. Sir Arthur Gordon had been in a similar position when he first arrived, the Royal Engineers having only come some months afterwards. But there was then a man-o'-war continually in the group, a fact which might have conduced to maintain tranquillity. Thus, though believing the natives to be generally loyal, I was by no means free from anxiety as to the consequences of sudden excitement among a peculiarly excitable people. Owing to the scarcity of funds white officers were few and far between, some of them located upon remote islands from which news could rarely be obtained in less than ten days or a fortnight. Any injustice or imprudence on their part, or even want of firmness against "white" aggressiveness, might easily lead to local danger, and such possibility was sensibly increased by the extraordinary reports as to the intentions of the Government towards the natives, which were continually being put in circulation by settlers who, with little or nothing to lose, apparently hoped to gain something from native dis-

turbance. Apprehensions on this score necessitated specially careful scrutiny of the reports which came in daily from magistrates and from Rokos and other native officers.

Fortunately for me, there was at the head of the Native Department Mr. D. Wilkinson, who had an intimate personal acquaintance with all the leading chiefs and an unequalled knowledge of the people with whom we had to deal. On several occasions he detected in reports passages which meant more than appeared on the surface, when it would have been dangerous to leave the matter referred to without immediate attention. The exercise of the large powers left to chiefs in connection with the maintenance of native law and customs required careful watching to prevent it from becoming oppressive. For, in the old days, undue exactions were liable to be summarily remedied by the club, whereas now the oppressed could obtain redress only from the Government. For the sake of promptness in dealing with the numerous reports relating to native affairs, which arrived almost daily from different parts of the groups, it was arranged that they, instead of being forwarded through the Colonial Secretary's office, should come to me directly from Mr. Wilkinson. Either he, or when he was absent on his travels, the acting Colonial Secretary, Mr. Thurston (whose knowledge of natives, though not so sympathetic, was scarcely inferior), came to me daily to explain doubtful points; and as there were decisions to be minuted in connection with all the other departments of government, as enumerated in my account of St. Lucia, it may be imagined that with difficulties of finance, disputed claims to land, and work provided by dissatisfied missionaries, incessantly complaining settlers, and an obstreperous Chief Justice, my time and thoughts were very fully occupied.

Land claims alone occupied a large portion of my time. At the date of the cession there had been some 1,650 of such claims by white men to land alleged to have been sold to them by natives. As nearly all of these were dis-

puted, special commissioners took the evidence on the spot, and the written depositions were forwarded to the Governor for decision in Council. Nearly all of these claims involved points of difficulty. Apart from the opposition of natives on various grounds (such as (1) alleged purchase from only some of many joint-owners, (2) boundaries including far more land than that actually sold, (3) fraud in procurement of signatures and in the preparation or alteration of deeds, (4) non-payment of consideration, etc.), some of the claims were also contested by white men. For owing to careless or fraudulent definition of boundaries, utterly unintelligible to the native vendors, the white claims frequently overlapped one another to such an extent that the same land was claimed by several different people. Some of the evidence which came before me showed that the natives had very clear conceptions as to the ownership of land, and held it to be of so sacred a nature that permissive occupation for any length of time had no effect in prescribing the rights of the original proprietors. In one case reported the occupiers of certain land were asked if they were the owners; to which the reply was that at a period long past, having been driven out of their own territory by a hostile tribe, they were allowed to settle upon it by the true owners; that they had, therefore, no right in it themselves, and still regarded themselves as "vulagi" or strangers.

The reports of the special commissioners, which were intended to assist towards the decision of the Governor in Council (though not by any means as complete and exhaustive as they became afterwards when made by my friend Victor Williamson, an English barrister specially selected by the Secretary of State for the purpose of these inquiries), were most of them fairly well done, and in most cases threw valuable light upon the evidence taken. In so far as I could observe, the treatment of white claimants had been by no means harsh. On the contrary, any doubt which arose in my mind was whether they had not been

favoured with undue liberality at the expense of the natives. Where there had been *bonâ-fide* occupation grants had always been made *ex gratiâ* to the claimants of a considerable portion of the land claimed, even where that title was manifestly bad, while in some cases large tracts were conceded to the white purchasers where the circumstances under which the original owners had been extruded seemed open to much exception. Taken as a whole, however, the work done in the decision of these claims appeared to me admirable, and its amount incredibly large, as done by one otherwise occupied with a difficult administration. Out of the 1,650 claims, Sir Arthur Gordon had in his first three years disposed of 836, while his minutes in all cases of difficulty (some of which, as regards complication, could only be compared to specially involved Chancery suits) were a standing evidence of his careful and patient consideration.

But though these 836 claims were at that time considered as finally disposed of, many of them had to be considered again by the Rehearing Court, which, as I have already mentioned, was afterwards constituted with the approval of Sir Arthur Gordon. It thus happened that in 1879 and the succeeding years there had to be disposed of not only the balance of over 800 original claims, but the rehearing of many others when either the claimants or the natives had been dissatisfied with the original decisions. The proceedings and judgments in some of these rehearings were subsequently published in Parliamentary Blue Books.

What labour and anxiety was undergone by the first two governors of Fiji in dealing with these claims and other subjects altogether foreign to the ordinary duties of government was never understood or appreciated at home ; and, indeed, this is scarcely to be wondered at, as to convey in words an adequate idea of it is practically impossible.

CHAPTER III

Arrival of Commodore Hoskins—A question of precedence and its settlement—Visit to Bau—Tribute to early missionaries—Contrast between Bau past and present—Messrs. Langham and Fison, chief missionaries—Curious similarity between African and Fijian names—Official relations with missionaries not agreeable—Polygamy and its difficulties—Continual attacks upon native policy; irksomeness of frequently repeated defence; falsity of adverse representations—Polynesian immigrants—Their unsatisfactory condition—Impracticability of adequate remedy—Pass law against a minor abuse—Visit to Wakaya.

ON the 22nd August, 1878, Commodore Hoskins arrived at Levuka in H.M.S. *Wolverene*. Owing to a defect in the colonial regulations, it was doubtful whether it was his duty or mine to pay the first official visit. But having never held these matters of the importance to warrant the controversies which have arisen in respect of them between officers of different branches of the Service, I at once offered to pay the first visit to the Commodore, though by his instructions he had on arrival to visit the Chief Justice, my subordinate officer. Commodore Hoskins, whose common sense perceived this anomaly, did not permit himself to be behindhand in courtesy, and we at once settled the matter amicably by dispensing altogether with official visits, he coming ashore to stay with us at Nasova. Having reported the doubts on this point to the Secretary of State, the question was settled by a new regulation prescribing, among other things, that Acting-Governors, as well as Governors, are to receive the first visit from all naval officers.

During Commodore Hoskins' visit he carried me in his steam-launch to visit Bau, the small island off the coast of Viti Levu, which had been all his life the principal residence of Thakombau, and where, before he was christianised,

he had been witness of and had partaken in many of the unspeakable atrocities which have made the place notorious. Sir Anthony Hoskins (now Admiral and recently a distinguished principal Naval Lord of the Admiralty), who was the Commodore in question, in writing to me lately on the subject, remarks: "You were rather the worse for the roll on the way, and were much comforted afterwards by a *terrine* of *foie gras*, the possession of which raised me greatly in your estimation!" Though I fear I must plead guilty to the sea-sickness, which was the more humiliating as the sea within the barrier reef was comparatively calm, I cannot admit that the high estimate I had formed of the Commodore from the first could have been raised even by the valuable possession so opportunely produced; and I am fortunately able to aver, by way of a friendly retort, that he showed much anticipatory delight at the fine turtle presented to him by Thakombau![1]

Probably no spot on the whole earth has been the scene of more cannibalistic orgies than was this little island within the short period of years immediately before and after the arrival of the first missionaries. Though experience has rendered me generally unfavourable to missionary enterprise in foreign countries and to the belief that whatever may have been the case formerly, the enormous sums spent upon it are for the most part wasted, and in some parts of the world, especially in China, are doing, and have done, much more harm than good, I must frankly acknowledge that Fiji is an exception to the general rule, and that the work of its pioneer missionaries was a grand one. In fact, I yield to no one in admiration for their bravery and their devotion to a noble work of civilisation. The contrast between the Bau which I saw and the awful scenes which would have been witnessed there by a visitor arriving some forty years previously, is well set forth by Miss Gordon Cumming in *At Home in Fiji*, to which I refer my readers

[1] Since the above was written his country and his many friends have incurred the loss of this distinguished officer.

who may be interested in the subject. The contrast between "now" and "then" struck me most in the evening, when the rhythmic notes of Christian hymns might be heard coming from the different houses around the very spot which not many years before had continually resounded with the dread tones of the death-lali.[1]

I am inclined to think that horrors of the past affect the imagination more in a place like Bau than when one looks upon scenes in civilised countries—such as the Place de la Concorde in Paris—where have been enacted inhumanities of almost equal abundance and horror. For in the latter the signs all round of an advanced civilisation seem so incongruous with the terrible antecedents as to render these the more difficult to realise, while in Bau the appearance of the place and people was even then so little removed from savagery as to render easy a mental reconstruction of the old-time sights.

During our short visit to Bau we of course paid a visit to the Vunivalu, who received us with his usual courteous dignity. I also visited Mr. Langham, whose kindly reception was in marked contrast to his political attitude. Both he and Mrs. Langham did all possible for my comfort and convenience, and in this short experience of them and their home I was enabled the better to understand Miss Gordon's enthusiastic account of them.

Mention of my visit to Mr. Langham, the chief representative in Fiji of the Australian Wesleyan Missionary Society, recalls the fact that at the time of my first visit to Bau my *social* relations with him and his colleague in the local administration of the Mission were all that could be desired. When on several occasions these gentlemen dined at Government House, I found in Mr. Langham a store of information about the past history of Fiji which, though presented from a somewhat narrow point of view, was nevertheless well worth hearing.

[1] The "lali" was a great wooden gong made of a transverse section of a tree-trunk hollowed out. One was in daily use at Nasova to announce meals.

Among many interesting things told me by his colleague Mr. Fison was one which furnishes a subject of curious speculation about the distribution of races. He said that having had his attention directed to recent discoveries in Africa, he was astonished to find that besides Tanganyika, which he had long recognised as a Fijian word (signifying a kind of fishing-net), several other names of places marked on the map as surrounding that lake were also Fijian words. The conjunction in the same order of the many letters required for the word "Tanganyika" by the inhabitants of places so widely distant as Fiji and Central Africa, is in itself very singular; but when similarly identical conjunctions are found in other words belonging to both places, the case is surely removed from the category of mere coincidence, and would seem to point to some former connection between the two peoples. Moreover, the coincidence, if it really be such, does not end here; though knowing little of the Fijian and nothing of the African languages, I mention the matter merely for the purpose of drawing attention to the subject. Looking at a map of Africa, I observed long ago how frequently in the names presented there the letter "b" is preceded by "m," the letters "g" or "d" by "n." These conjunctions are perhaps not less common to other languages in the middle of words, but not so, I think, at the beginning, as in names such as Ngami, Ngoro-ngoro, Ngegimi, Mpoto, Mpopwa, Ndaye, Mbongo, Mbanga, in Africa, and Mbau, Ngau, Ngoro, Mbatiki, Mbua, Mbenga, in Fiji. For though in printing Fijian words the initial letter in these cases is often omitted, its sound is always present in pronunciation, and I think it probable that a similar desire of brevity may have caused many African words to be similarly docked. There may be observed also in the word Ngoro-ngoro and others, such as Niam-niam, Kota-kota, etc., a repetition of two syllables, which in Fijian names is very common, as, for instance, Loma Loma, Savu Savu, Somo Somo, Ruku Ruku, etc., etc.

I do not find that any of the peculiarities mentioned exist

in the names of Australia, Melanesia, New Guinea, or the Malay Archipelago, which intervene between Africa and Fiji, and this renders the more remarkable so many similarities in language of places separated by some nine thousand miles.

Social intercourse apart, I regret to say that my official relations with the representatives of the Wesleyan Mission were somewhat strained from the first. Shortly after the close of correspondence in respect of the impugned land decision, the chief representative of the Mission attacked a law on the subject of marriage which had been passed by the Native Regulation Board, with the approval of Sir Arthur Gordon, more than a year before. The principal objection was against a clause which recognised as valid all marriages contracted according to native custom, and which by the same custom were still binding at the time the law was passed. This provision, no doubt, had the effect of, to a certain extent, recognising polygamy; but, as I informed Mr. Langham in defending it, I considered that preferable to the conditions which had been brought about by the missionaries. I referred to their practice of compelling their converts to abandon (which in practice involved leaving them to the tender mercies of the community) all their wives but one, and even in some instances (which the Native Commissioner mentioned to me and expressed his willingness to prove) permitting the putting away of all previous wives with a view to a contract of so-called Christian marriage with another woman. For this and other reasons I strenuously defended the regulation, and the opposition to it was discreetly permitted to subside.

Without describing in detail other action on the part of the Wesleyan missionaries, which at different times during this acting-administration caused me embarrassment and much unnecessary correspondence, I may mention, as specially characteristic, that in two instances within my first year natives were suspended or dismissed from Church membership for assisting on Sunday in the carriage of my

official letters, marked "Immediate," and happening to be of great importance. The explanation was to the effect that though the carriage was obligatory as required by the Government, the punishment was not for the work, but for receiving payment. So that, in fact, natives had to choose between the gratuitous performance of a compulsory service and expulsion from Church membership, and this in a colony where a letter sent from the seat of Government to some of the out-districts could not, even with the utmost despatch, reach its destination in less than ten days or a fortnight. I may mention that expulsion from Church membership involved a social degradation which was regarded by the Fijians as a very severe punishment.

During my second administration Mr. Langham assisted the planters—a somewhat incongruous combination—in determined attacks, which happily proved unsuccessful, upon the Government native policy. His letters with my replies having been published for Parliament, I make no further reference to them.

Besides the Wesleyans there were also in Fiji some Roman Catholic missionaries, who, having arrived later, had made a comparatively small number of converts. Though the existence in the group of these antagonistic forms of Christianity sometimes gave rise to difficulties, I am bound to say that the conduct of the Catholics towards the Government and its policy was in marked contrast with that of their rivals, and that, in so far as I was able to learn, they were invariably loyal in both speech and action, while their apostolic poverty and the extreme simplicity of their lives entitled them to special respect.

But even at this time Fiji owed much to the Wesleyan mission, despite the unfriendly attitude of its representatives in the islands; and these, I do not doubt, were worthy men, who believed themselves actuated solely by the best motives. Moreover, they would have been scarcely human if they were not to a certain extent unconsciously actuated by the change in their position which had resulted from the

advent of British government; for before the cession they exercised an autocratic sway over their converts, which by laws and administrative action had been gradually modified. When men suffer loss of power it is scarcely conceivable that they should be without resentment against that which has caused it.

Not the least irksome of the tasks which was imposed upon me during both periods of my administration in Fiji was that of continually defending the native policy of the Government against attacks coming from many quarters.

But of all the very numerous allegations intended to discredit the system which in the course of six or seven years were made in official communications intended for the digestion of the Secretary of State, nearly all proved to be either pure inventions or so exaggerated as to bear little resemblance to the truth. In most instances, though unhappily not in all, those responsible for these statements made them, I do not doubt, in good faith. I imagine that, being greatly interested in believing them true, they accepted without inquiry, rumours deliberately put in circulation by the disaffected.

For example, the Secretary of State was informed that five recent suicides had been caused by the oppression suffered from the native taxation. On inquiry it was found that the cause of three out of the five was jealousy or suspicion of conjugal infidelity, while the other two cases had occurred in a district of Colo (mountains of Viti Levu), to which, owing to its recent conquest, the taxation system had not yet been extended! The proneness of the Fijians to commit suicide on account of love troubles was illustrated by a case which occurred only a few weeks after the above statement first appeared in print. A native killed himself in Levuka on being told that his wife (whom he had voluntarily left for a year on a contract of service) had become unfaithful. If the records of the Colonial Office were examined, I have little doubt that the European complaints against the two first Governors of Fiji and the system of

native government, together with the replies and all papers connected with them, would fill a very large volume of print.

Before I had been many months in Fiji I became impressed with the unprotected condition of the Polynesian immigrants. These were people imported by planters under labour contracts for three years' service. They came from many quarters—from the New Hebrides, Solomons, New Britain, and New Ireland, some thousand miles or more to the westward, and from the various groups of islands near the line to the northward. The conditions of this system of immigration seemed in several respects unsatisfactory; but Sir Arthur Gordon had found the system in operation, and, whatever his objections to it, he could not abolish it without facing the certainty of greatly increased pressure for the enforced employment of Fijian labour. And so he tolerated one evil in order to avert a greater, doing probably all that was then possible by way of modifying it, especially in passing a law which greatly improved the system. Considering that there was only one inspector to look after these immigrants, scattered all over the colony, whose local visits were only annual, I felt some qualms as to what might be happening unknown to Government, especially when so many of the planters entirely lacked the means of providing properly for their labourers. For I had learnt by experience how many Europeans hold in practice to the principle announced in the celebrated Dred Scott decision of the Supreme Court of the United States that the coloured man "has no rights that the white man is bound to respect," and how when a European employer is in embarrassed circumstances the chief sufferer is apt to be his coloured labourer. I had grave suspicions that the high death-rate of these wretched Polynesians might be lowered had we the necessary funds. But, alas! the extreme niggardliness of the home Government towards the new colony precluded the supply of even more obvious wants. And so the local Government was helpless not only

in this matter, but in that other still more important—the proper provision for the welfare of the Fijians, so as to arrest the depopulation of the islands.

For the above reason I was able to do but little during this temporary administration for the Polynesians, the want of inspection rendering it impossible to detect the suspected abuses which, during my second administration, were largely brought to light. For one abuse, however, which was being perpetrated under the very eye of the Government, I provided an immediate remedy—an abuse which, though trivial in character, revealed a disposition to take advantage of Polynesian helplessness, which was not likely to be less displayed in places remote from inconvenient supervision. The wretched wages of the Polynesians —three pounds a year—were paid only at the end of his period of service, and then not in money, which would be useless to him on his return home, but in goods. In some cases to which my attention was drawn the value of the goods thus supplied to departing labourers was so utterly disproportionate to the amount of wages due that, despite receipted accounts for the proper amount, it was clear that either there had been extreme carelessness in the purchases or collusion between the employer and the seller in fraud of the labourer. The law forwarded by me for sanction in February, 1879, put an end to this abuse by requiring all payments to Polynesians to be made through the Agent-General of Immigration.

In April, 1879, all of us requiring change, we went to spend a few days on the island of Wakaya, which lies opposite to Nasova, our place of residence, at a distance of some twelve miles. The house, which had been placed at our disposal by the proprietors, was situated near the shore, in a beautiful spot whence glimpses of the blue water, seemingly snow-flecked by breaking waves, might be seen through groves of coconut palms. Though owing to the absence of interviews I enjoyed here comparative rest, the frequent arrival of papers by no means permitted me to be idle.

The island does not, I should say, speaking from memory, exceed five miles in length or three in breadth; but it has in it valleys, entirely surrounded by land, which seemed as though they might be a thousand miles from the sea or from human habitation. There was at that time but little cultivation, and that chiefly of coconuts and near the shore. Though here and there in the island there were fine trees (viz. ivi, ndilo, and ndrala), the greater part of it was covered merely by coarse grass, dotted by the somewhat grotesque forms of a species of pandanus. There were, however, bays, edged with white sand and washed by a sea of indigo-blue, which, with no sail in sight, seemed as though they might never have been visited by man.

But life here, however enjoyable at first, became quickly monotonous; and so we were not altogether sorry when one morning, after a week's sojourn there, Mr. Thurston appeared with the news that I was wanted at headquarters. He had come in a cutter-yacht belonging to Thakombau, in which we at once embarked and returned to Nasova.

CHAPTER IV

Open Veibose (meeting of chiefs) at Bua—Subject of speech on the occasion—Misconduct of Roko Tuis (native provincial governors) and their punishment—Distribution of presents—Procession of chiefs—A girl chieftainess—Subjects before Bose sagaciously discussed—Its resolutions and my speech at close of meeting—Favourable impressions produced by meeting—Visit to Rewa River; rough experiences on way thither—Unwelcome night visitors—Residence in native house—Meals in public—Social life—Australian Governor's anecdote—Open Oddfellows' lodge—Inauguration of Levuka Mechanics' Institute—Birth of son and early death—Considerate behaviour of Native Constabulary—Appalling telegram.

ON the 14th November, 1878, I went in H.M.S. *Nymphe* to open the Veibose, or great meeting of the chiefs, at Bua.[1] These meetings were held annually, with the object of promoting free discussions amongst the natives. I was met by the Roko Tui and Mr. Blyth, the stipendiary magistrate of Vanua Levu. I made a long address to the chiefs on this occasion, beginning with, "I deem myself fortunate, my friends, chiefs of Fiji, in having the opportunity during my short term of office here of attending your great annual meeting, and I see in this large and punctual attendance an encouragement to the Queen's Government in its efforts to promote through you the welfare of her Fijian people." After touching on various subjects, I suggested that they should take up seriously, at the point at which it was left at the close of the previous year's meeting, the question of the distribution and succession of lands; I combated strenuously the notion that the natives must necessarily die out before the white man, feeling sure that this feeling of despondency tends even

[1] A province situate at the extreme western end of the Vanua Levu, the smaller of the two large islands of the group.

more than insanitary conditions to the disappearance of native races. I pointed out instances where native races had increased in number in face of the white man. "In Java, which is inhabited by men of almost the same colour, and probably in considerable measure the same race with yourselves, the number of people has enormously increased since the coming of the white man, and has more than doubled in the last fifty years, while in India, with its 190,000,000 of people living peaceably under Her Majesty's rule—1,800 for every one in Fiji—difficulty is caused to the Government, not by the decreasing, but by the too rapidly increasing, numbers of people." After strongly urging the acceptance of vaccination as a safeguard against small-pox, I adverted to the native laws, customs, and government, solemnly assuring them, "notwithstanding all you may be and are being told by designing persons to the contrary," there was no intention on the part of the Government to abolish them, the belief of the Government being that, when modified and improved under the chiefs' advice, they were best adapted to the character and habits of the people. In one or two instances I suggested subjects for their discussion and recommendations, such as increased protection for married women, improvement in the marriage law, and increased facilities for entering the married state. Finally, I appealed to them earnestly to give no opening for attack on the part of those unfriendly to the native policy, "to refrain from putting unduly heavy burthens upon your people, from exacting contributions to feasts which exhaust their supplies of food, or taking from them labour or property which may be more necessary to them than to yourselves. For I must tell you that the experiment of self-government by natives is being closely watched, and the nearer it approaches to success, the greater will be the exertions of those who wish its failure."

The same evening I embarked again on the *Nymphe*, and the following day arrived at Levuka.

I had felt obliged to exclude from the Veibose two Rokos

for grave offences, and I knew this would be regarded by them as a serious disgrace. I decided upon this measure only after careful consideration. For the actual Roko Tuis were those who wielded the most hereditary influence, and there was a risk that the supersession of any of them would involve the appointment of others who would be no better in other respects, while carrying less weight of authority. Still I felt that misconduct such as had now been acknowledged by those guilty of it ought, at any rate, to be marked with public reprobation, or the Government inaction would be sure to give rise to sinister surmises in the native mind. It would be supposed either that we were afraid to punish high chiefs or that we looked with a lenient eye upon their misdoings. In either case the prestige of the Government would be injured, and there would be seriously impaired its reputation for equal justice, which it was beyond all things desirable to retain.

The attendance of the high chiefs at the Veibose was regarded by them as a great privilege, while they were by no means insensible to its accompaniments of pleasure, in the shape of feasting, dancing, and distribution of presents. Exclusion, therefore, together with the disgrace involved in the public knowledge of it, was by no means a light penalty, and for the case of drunkenness I deemed it sufficient, in the hope that it might bring about improvement. More, however, was required for the other offender, who was Ratu Timoci, before referred to, one of the younger sons of Thakombau. His further services were dispensed with, he was deprived for two years of the powers and dignity of chief, and was directed to live during that period under his father's eye at a village near Bau. Thakombau, with whom I had conversed about the case, had in a spirit worthy of his position suggested to me the expediency of severity, as the only means of saving his son from a career of vice and crime. These public examples produced an excellent effect among the people, and for a time it induced improvement among those chiefs whose conduct was open to exception.

Some five weeks after leaving Bua I returned thither to close the meeting. Before the serious business was brought to an end there took place in my presence a great distribution of presents, each province having brought a large supply of its products, tappa (native cloth), sinnet (the string made of fibre used for tying the rafters of houses and for other purposes) in huge rolls, salt in lumps weighing some of them over a hundredweight, yams, taro (the much-esteemed esculent root of a variety of calladium), bananas, turtles, pigs, etc., etc. There was emulation among the provinces in their contributions to the general stock for distribution. One of these was sufficiently startling to impress itself particularly on the memory. Amid tremendous yelling of excitement and approval, a large double canoe in full sail, with its whole crew on board, was dragged by hundreds of men upon rollers on to the rara in front of me and formally presented by the Roko of Bua, who being in some respects the host of the chiefs, apparently felt impelled to surpass all the rest in munificence.

In the course of this function the head chiefs of each province passed before me in procession, each walking proudly in front of his followers, though his figure had been rendered enormously bulky by a great roll of tappa wound round and round his waist, of which he proceeded to disburthen himself, as part of his contribution. Maafu, who on account of illness had been unable to attend, had sent his young daughter to represent him, and it was a sight not easily to be forgotten when this little lady, apparently not more than eleven years old, walked past me in the most stately fashion with her train of tappa carried by some two hundred of her father's retainers. A short conversation with this girl afterwards, as well as the demeanour of the chiefs generally, confirmed the impression previously received that the families of chiefs in Fiji, both in their oldest and youngest members, have a remarkable dignity, which as an accompaniment of hereditary rank is sometimes in Europe noticeable by its absence.

After all the presents had been deposited, the distribution took place, the arrangement of shares being amicably effected by the native aide-de-camps (mata-ni-vanuas) of the different chiefs. A large share was awarded to the Governor, which, with the exception of one turtle, was, as customary, handed over for the use of the native armed Constabulary.

During my absence from Bua the Bose had prepared for my consideration twenty-eight resolutions, each adopted only after earnest debate, in the course of which some of the chiefs, especially Thakombau and the Roko Tuis of Ra and Bua, made speeches and remarks, indicating remarkable wisdom and good judgment. These resolutions dealt with a great variety of subjects, and previous to the final ceremony for closing the Bose, I dealt with each of these resolutions in detail, approving nearly all of them, and referring sympathetically to others, which as touching questions of permanent policy I did not feel to be subjects for the decisions of an Acting-Governor.

After thanking all present in the Queen's name for the earnest and effective attention they had bestowed upon so many important questions, I closed the meeting.

I was greatly pleased generally with what I saw at Bua, which convinced me that the assemblage of people from all parts of the group was in various respects useful. Nevertheless, I gathered the impression that the numbers attending were unduly large, and that these might without disadvantage be considerably restricted. This impression was confirmed by my subsequent experience, when it became evident that each province, as in its turn the meeting was held there, was endeavouring to "beat the record" in display, and during my second administration I took measures accordingly. Since my time these meetings have become simply a medium of political discussion, all the picturesque and by no means useless characteristics of them having been ruthlessly eliminated. There may, of course, have been good reason for this in the altered circumstances;

otherwise I should deplore the change. For the distribution of presents was a means by which each province obtained easily from others requirements which it did not itself produce, one having a speciality in rock-salt, another in sinnet (the twine used for house-building and other purposes), another in mats, etc. Moreover, I doubt whether Fijian chiefs would discuss business so cheerfully or thoroughly if deprived of their principal amusement during hours of leisure—I refer to "mekes" (native dances), which necessitate the presence of a considerable number of people. Even if, as is probable, the principles of administration have now become so settled that much less than formerly requires to be discussed, it may be presumed that there must be some business, or there would be no meetings, and in that case it would be perhaps well to remember that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" applies even more to the Fijian than to the average man.

The thousands of people present at this gathering most certainly did not wear the dejected appearance of the oppressed, as white malignity against the native policy represented; on the contrary, their facial expression and general demeanour furnished strong evidence to the contrary. In fact, I never saw in any country a great number of people of the labouring class with happier faces or with clearer indications of fine physical condition. I was particularly struck by a body of two thousand men who came over from the neighbouring province of Macuata for the purpose of taking part in the concluding festivities. In stature and general physical appearance it would be difficult to find their equals in the world—a fact the more remarkable as Macuata is, or was, owing to the comparative poverty of the soil, one of the poorest provinces. Altogether the meeting considerably raised my estimate of the character, capacity, and existing condition of the Fijian chiefs and people.

In December, 1878, being somewhat overcome by the heat of an unusually hot summer, I was ordered by Dr.

Macgregor[1] to give up business for a time and to take a short change in order to avert a threatened breakdown. I determined to go to the Rewa River, which has a winding course of over one hundred miles, in the island of Viti Levu. I had been offered the use of a house situated on its right bank about twenty-five miles from the sea. It belonged to Andi Kuela, the daughter of Thakombau, and one who, having a masculine intelligence and force of character, was admirably discharging on behalf of her young son the duties of Roko of Naitisiri, an inland province of Viti Levu. I started for this destination early one morning, accompanied only by my private secretary. When our boat had proceeded only a short distance, I became so ill that I felt compelled to return; but getting better towards afternoon, I was induced to start again, my wife this time insisting on being my companion, though her own condition of health by no means fitted her for an expedition promising rough experiences.

The distance from Levuka to the mouth of the Rewa is over forty miles, and our start took place too late to permit of reaching our destination that night. The wind, moreover, was unfavourable, rendering impossible the use of sails, and despite the exertions of the sixteen oarsmen who manned Sir Arthur Gordon's barge, night came upon us off the coast of Viti Levu when we were still a long distance from Bau, where we had hoped to sleep. At last it became so dark that, as we had no compass on board, further progress was deemed impossible. Finding that we were in shallow water, two of the boat hands (all members of the armed Constabulary) volunteered to swim to shore and ascertain our whereabouts. Hour after hour passed without sign of their return, and it seemed probable that we should have to pass the rest of the night drifting about in an open boat. But about eleven o'clock some loud shouting announced approaching humanity, and presently came alongside a small canoe which had been brought to take us

[1] Now Sir William Macgregor, K.C.M.G., Governor of Lagos.

ashore. Even this drew too much water to approach close to land, to reach which we all, my wife included, had to be carried by the boat hands, some of whom had swum from the barge on purpose.

The "town" at which we had arrived was not a favourable specimen of a Fijian village. It was built in a swamp, which, though in the darkness not evident to the sight, betrayed its presence to other senses by a chilly dampness and somewhat noxious exhalations. The chief, however, did his best for us with the usual native courtesy, and placed his house at our disposal. Soft heaps of mats were placed for our beds, over which we caused to be hung, as evidently necessary, the mosquito curtains which we had brought with us. As soon as politeness permitted we retired to rest, but not to sleep. At length my wife was on the point of doing so when she was aroused by a grunt close to her head. The dim light burning at the other end of the room at once revealed the presence of a pig. This animal, doubtless infected with something of the native courtesy, had invaded the premises also for the purpose of paying his unwelcome attentions to the strangers. After I had driven out the intruder, my wife was again disturbed on the verge of slumber by another animal, this time a biped. The light being suddenly obscured by some intervening body, her attention was at once aroused, and it was naturally with some alarm that she saw a dark face peering into her mosquito curtain. Again called up from my neighbouring couch, I found that the trespasser this time was a very old woman, looking, in the faint light given by a single candle, an ideal witch. It appeared that she (the chief's wife) had never before had the opportunity of seeing a white woman at such close quarters, and curiosity had got the better of her at a time when, believing we were all asleep, she hoped to gratify it without discovery.

When at length towards morning we had closed our eyes to some purpose, we were again, as it seemed almost immediately, awoke by a *tama* proceeding from several

throats. A number of natives were sitting on either side of the door, and had entered the room so silently that their presence was only made known by the conventional murmur of respect. They proved to be our host and the chiefs of neighbouring villages, who had come to present whales' teeth, the native token of respectful welcome, as well as some roast pigs, yams, etc. I of course made due acknowledgment of their courtesy, and though inwardly wishing that their visit had been better timed, I managed to conceal my feelings and sent them away highly pleased with themselves.

Later in the same day we entered the mouth of the Rewa River (catching on the way a large king-fish, over two feet long, with a bait consisting only of a piece of calico rag), and, proceeding up the river, arrived in the afternoon at Andi Kuela's house.

This, which was to be our home for some days, was a native house, constructed in the ordinary way with thatched walls and roof. It was of much more than average size, and as belonging to a high chief was of specially careful construction, while as further distinguishing it from the houses of the common herd it was adorned on the outside with the white cowry shells which are indicative of rank in the owner. Its single large room had its floor covered with many layers of beautifully clean soft mats, into which the feet sank deep in crossing them, specially fine ones being upon a slightly raised daïs, intended for the sleeping quarters of the principal occupants. With the aid of large sheets of tappa, we were able to make compartments so as to provide fairly comfortable rooms.

We were never able to have our meals in private. Always while they were in progress, and, in fact, during the greater part of the day, numbers of natives (who, according to chief's custom, were allowed to enter at will) were squatted against the wall at the lower end of the room, watching us keenly. Every now and then, when in accordance with European habits we did something which

was outside their previous experience, they would clap their hands and make a low murmur, indicating at the same time wonder and approval. This was amusing at first, but after a time somewhat irksome. Indeed, though after the novelty wore off we would have gladly dispensed with this publicity, we preferred to bear with it rather than hurt the feelings of people who had no idea of anything but a kindly respect. But never before had we been able so keenly to appreciate how disagreeable must have become to those very august personages, the French monarchs, the obligation of eating their dinners in view of a crowd of spectators. Though under ordinary circumstances we should probably have much enjoyed it, I must candidly say that our sojourn here can only be regarded as pleasing in retrospect. For the heat, severe outside, was intensified within the house by want of ventilation, the only openings for air being two narrow doors. Moreover, flies, ordinarily troublesome in Fiji, were here a real plague, and combined with an intense lassitude to render writing and even reading difficult, sometimes impossible. We were therefore not sorry to get back to our comfortable quarters at Nasova.

During the ensuing seasons (1878–9) we had a dance at Government House, which the colonists regarded as most successful, and we entertained at dinner all the high chiefs who visited Ovalau as well as all the principal Government officers and leading settlers, some of them several or many times, succeeding thus in softening many political asperities. The demeanour at table of most of the "whites" was beyond reproach, though in manners several would have done well to take example from the native chiefs, whom they were pleased to despise as inferiors. Apropos, I remember an Australian Governor once telling me that among the members of the House of Assembly whom he was entertaining at dinner was one who, having passed his life in the "bush," was not *au courant* with the ways of civilised life. Apparently he had been "coached" for the part of guest at the Governor's table, and had been told

that it was bad manners to appear hungry. So after two or three mouthfuls of each course he put down his spoon or his knife and fork, with the intention of taking them up again after a short interval. But the servants being active, on each occasion his plate was carried away before he could resume the attack upon its contents, and in this way he lost all but a very slender portion of soup, fish, etc., etc., and there seemed every prospect of his getting up from dinner hungry. At last there was put before him some wild turkey, a viand he evidently regarded with special favour. He was determined not to lose that, and so while again putting down his fork in what he regarded as the orthodox fashion, he remained on guard with his knife. When again a servant attempted to remove his plate, the guest, now become irate (and who may be supposed to have consumed more champagne than food), startled the assembled guests by exclaiming in a loud voice, "Ah, you would, would you? If you do I'll cut your b—— fingers off!" at the same time holding up his knife as though quite ready to carry out his threat.

A boy was born to us in February, 1879, at Government House, Nasova, which lived only a few weeks and was buried on the hill-spur which divides the valleys of Nasova and Draimba. This time of serious anxiety and another similar occasion during my second administration of the government of Fiji, recalls in grateful remembrance the extraordinarily considerate conduct of the Native Armed Constabulary. Though nearly a hundred men of this force[1] were quartered within a stone's-throw of our house at Nasova, they for the whole of the two months during which on each occasion my wife was in a more or less precarious condition, preserved a remarkable silence. Scarcely a sound came from their quarters, whence ordinarily during hours of leisure proceeded much shouting and other evidence of noisy gaiety. Even laughter utterly ceased,

[1] Some of this force were recently in London for attendance on the occasion of His Majesty's Coronation.

and their talk must have been entirely in whispers. I question whether any other force in the world would for so long a time have preserved a similarly considerate restraint.

In connection with this child's birth, I find from a letter of Lord Stanmore's written at this time, that a curious mistake was made in transmitting the news to England. After congratulating us on the event, he expresses the hope that the telegram announcing it was not literally accurate. "Its appalling announcement," he wrote, "was '*nine* boys born on such a day.'"

CHAPTER V

Death of Tui Thakau—I attend his funeral—A unique law—"The Uniform Date Ordinance"—180th meridian: misapprehensions on the subject—Arrival of *Leonidas* infected with small-pox and cholera—Difficulties of guarding against infection—How surmounted—A risky shot—Loyal assistance of natives—Measures for promoting vaccination and their success—Pass indemnity law—General approval of measures by Secretary of State—Law for preservation of bêche-de-mer and its necessity—Appearance of coffee-leaf disease—Measures in consequence—I refrain from destroying infected plantation—My reasons approved by Kew authorities—Intemperate act of Maafu; a disagreeable difficulty and its happy solution—Torumah desires annexation to Fiji—Depute Commander Bower to proceed thither—His report—Long swims by the Fijians—Act of extraordinary heroism; Her Majesty desires copy of my report upon it—Leavetaking by chiefs; their tribute to my wife—Touching speech by Thakombau—Sir Arthur Gordon's return—His generous appreciation of my work—Leave Fiji.

ONE day in March, 1879, I learnt by special messenger that Tui Thakau (the Roko of the province which included the island of Taviuni and, after Cakombau and Maafu, the most important chief of Fiji) was dead, and that the funeral was postponed in order that I, as Supreme Chief, might be present at it. This was the first death of a high chief since the organisation of the new colony of Fiji, and recognising the importance from the native point of view of celebrating the obsequies with all possible honour, I waited for the assistance of a ship-of-war. There was no difficulty about this on the score of delay. For in that climate it is quite as difficult to preserve a body two days as for any longer period, and as according to native custom weeks have to be passed in due preparation for the burial of a high chief, deceased is usually covered with lime a few hours after death.

I proceeded to Taviuni in H.M.S. *Cormorant*, taking with me the Vunivalu (Cakombau), his eldest son, Ratu Epeli,

Roko Tui of the eastern province of Viti Levu, and Mr. Thurston, Colonial Secretary. The funeral took place on the 25th. I followed as a mourner, as also did Thakombau and other high chiefs, and the ship's company of the *Cormorant* accorded naval honours. I remember being much struck by the solemn demeanour of the large concourse of natives who attended the ceremony. If they did not deeply regret the death of the chief, as I believe they did, their sorrow was at least wonderfully feigned. In any case the majority were probably apprehensive of the consequences which might ensue from the chief's death, and were anxious about the appointment of his successor. For this, being made by the new Government, would emphasise to them more than ever before the change which had come over the country.

In making the necessary choice I was somewhat embarrassed. Mr. Thurston, who was under considerable obligations to Tui Thakau's family in respect of circumstances which occurred previous to the cession, strongly urged the immediate appointment of Ratu Lala, his eldest son. Though no other head of the province was so likely to be generally accepted, I felt that any permanent appointment was of much more importance to Sir Arthur Gordon than to myself, and that as he was expected within a few weeks, I was not justified in anticipating his choice, and this more especially as I had doubts, which subsequent events during my second administration proved to be justified, whether the young chief, who was being educated in Sydney, and had naturally become Europeanised in his habits, should not have a certain probationary training for a very un-European position, before being entrusted with its functions. Consequently, I was glad to find that for at least one, if not both of these reasons, Mr. Wilkinson, the Commissioner for Native Affairs, was inclined to a temporary measure, by which several of the most influential chiefs of the province would together undertake the functions of Roko, pending a permanent appointment by Sir Arthur

Gordon. When this idea was suggested to the Vunivalu, he strongly approved of it, and I accordingly determined to adopt it. I was glad also to hear afterwards that the honour paid to the chief's remains had had a very useful effect throughout the group.

In April or May, 1879, my attention was drawn to the inconvenient consequences which might ensue, as the colony became more populous, from the fact that the meridian of 180° passes through the group. As it actually traverses Taviuni, the island which, after Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, is next in point of area and importance, it would be possible, given observations of sufficiently exact accuracy, for a man to stand there with one leg in Monday and the other in Tuesday nearly at the same hour! And even in the absence of this unattainable precision, he could, within the compass of a very short walk, pass from what is certainly Monday to what is with equal certainty Tuesday, or *vice versâ*.

Doubts might thus be easily raised as to the date on which any event had taken place, such as the commission of a crime, or the signature of a promissory note, and an opening would be given for fraud and legal complications. To obviate this inconvenience, I drafted with some difficulty and passed into law an ordinance which is of a sufficiently singular character to deserve insertion here, together with my message to the Legislature explaining it.[1]

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[1] The Ordinance ran in this wise :—

FIJI.] AN ORDINANCE. [No. XIV., 1879.

(Enacted by the Governor of the Colony of Fiji, with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council thereof.)

TO PROVIDE FOR AN UNIFORM DATE THROUGHOUT THE COLONY.

(L.S.) G. W. DES VŒUX.

Preamble. Whereas according to the ordinary rule of noting time any given time would in that part of the Colony lying to the east of the meridian of 180 degrees from Greenwich be noted as of a day of the week and month different from the day by which the same time would be noted in the part of the Colony lying to the west of such meridian :

And whereas by custom the ordinary rule has been set aside and time has been noted throughout the Colony as though the whole were situate to the west of such meridian :

MESSAGE TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

"G. WILLIAM DES VŒUX.

"The Lieutenant-Governor administering the government has directed to be laid on the table an Ordinance of which the short title is 'The Uniform Date Ordinance, 1879.'

"The Colony of Fiji being crossed by the meridian of 180°, reckoned from the meridian of Greenwich, that part of it lying to the west of this line, is, according to the ordinary rule of noting time, nearly twenty-four hours in advance of that lying to the east—so that, for instance, when at the town of Vuna, in the island of Taviuni, it was noon on the first day of January, 1879, it was, properly speaking, only a few seconds after noon of the 31st December, 1878, at Nai-sele-sele, situate only a few miles distant in the same island.

"The custom which has obviated this inconvenience by adopting for the whole Colony the date which, according to the ordinary rule, is correct only in the western portion, has besides uniformity, the additional advantage that the date in question is the correct date in all the other Australian Colonies, and is in use even in islands lying to the eastward, where communications are principally with those Colonies.

"The Ordinance in question, by legalising this custom, will remove all doubts on the subject for the future, doubts which, as the affairs of the Colony increase in number and importance, might otherwise be productive of much inconvenience.

"By His Excellency's Command,

"JOHN B. THURSTON,

"NASOVA, 19*th February*, 1879." "*Colonial Secretary.*

And whereas in order to preclude uncertainty for the future it is expedient that the above custom should be legalised:

Be it therefore enacted by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council as follows:—

Time—how calculated.

I. Time in this Colony shall be noted as if the whole Colony were situate to the west of the meridian of 180 degrees from Greenwich.

(Exempli gratiâ.—To-day, which according to the ordinary rule for noting time is on the island of Ovalau the fifth day of June and on the Island of Vanua Balavu the fourth day of June, would by this Ordinance be deemed to be the fifth day of June, 1879, in the whole Colony.)

Short Title.

II. This Ordinance may be cited as the Uniform Date Ordinance, 1879.

Passed in Council this fifth day of June in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy-nine.

This law may well be cited as unique. Except, perhaps, some coral atoll in the Pacific, the meridian of 180° passes over no other land but Taviuni in Fiji and the extreme end of Asiatic Russia, some hundreds of miles east of Kamschatka. Yet such a law may be required in the Chatham Islands, which though situated some five hundred miles from New Zealand, form part of that colony. Though the 180th meridian does not pass over them it lies between them and the principal islands, so that they are in the western hemisphere, while New Zealand proper is in the eastern. Should these islands continue subject to the courts of justice of the main colony, it is possible a case may some day occur which will necessitate a similar law in New Zealand.

With respect to the change of date caused by crossing the 180th meridian, before my first voyage across the Pacific I was ignorant on the subject, as I believe still are the great majority of Englishmen. The dropping of a day from the week, or the adding one to it, according as the voyage is westward or eastward, naturally occasions curiosity as to the cause of this anomaly. The average brain does not, I still find, grasp the situation easily, and in each of my several voyages across the Pacific, I have been rendered weary by demands from many quarters for explanations, which sometimes had to be reiterated again and again to the same person before the dawn of comprehension.

Confusion of mind on this subject is not, however, confined to ordinary steamboat passengers. When reading in Fiji in this same year 1879, a well-known book of travel, I was surprised to find the following in the description of a yacht-voyage from Hawaii to Yokohama :—

"Thursday, January 11th, had no existence for us, as in crossing the 180th parallel of latitude (*sic*) we have lost a day. Friday, January 12th. Wednesday morning with us was Tuesday evening with people in England, and we are now twelve hours in advance of them. To-day the order of things is reversed, and we are now twelve hours behind our friends at home."

Apart from what may be regarded as a slip of the pen, viz. the mention of "latitude" instead of longitude, there are here two serious errors, which I leave the reader to detect for himself.

While on the subject of this change of date, I may mention that when in 1883, during my second administration of Fiji, in discharge of the functions of High Commissioner, I paid a visit to Samoa in H.M.S. *Diamond*, there was in harbour an American ship-of-war which was keeping as Sunday the same day as that which we were regarding as Monday, our Sunday having been kept the day before. The Americans were in fact right and we were wrong, but the *Diamond* having only within a few days entered into west longitude, and it being our intention to return immediately, it was naturally not deemed desirable to alter the day twice within one week, and this especially as Samoa, though east of 180°, having been first settled from Australia and New Zealand, had adopted the day of those colonies.

In May, 1879, occurred an event which caused to me some weeks of intense anxiety. To satisfy the planters' demands for labour, Governor Gordon had arranged with the Indian Government for the introduction of coolies from Hindostan. The first ship chartered for this purpose, with 480 immigrants on board, arrived off the Port of Levuka on the 14th of the above month. Having failed to enter the harbour that evening, early next morning Mr. Thurston, the Colonial Secretary (whose early training made him specially expert in nautical matters), observed her getting into a dangerous position, and went off in an open boat outside the reef for the purpose of saving her from imminent loss. On approaching the ship someone on board called out that both cholera and small-pox were, or had been, among the passengers. Such news was, indeed, alarming. Less than five years before measles, introduced by a ship-of-war from Sydney, had caused the death of more than 40,000 natives out of a total population of about 160,000. If these more virulent diseases were to be per-

mitted a foothold, it was probable that the people would be all but extinguished. And yet how could we with the means at our disposal prevent such a result? To make the situation clear, I will quote passages from my despatch to the Secretary of State on the subject (which was printed in a Parliamentary Blue Book), dated 7th September, 1880.

"After carefully considering a number of possible alternatives, I determined, with the full concurrence of Dr. MacGregor,[1] that the vessel should be brought within the barrier reef, and be anchored near it in that portion of the harbour which, with reference to the prevailing wind, is to the leeward of the town. Had we had at command, or deemed it possible to obtain, a sufficient number of police or other officers or persons upon whom reliance could be placed for guarding the vessel efficiently, I should have much preferred an anchorage near some uninhabited or less populous part of the Colony. But after considering the 'personnel' at my disposal, the unanimous opinion of my advisers was to the effect that the course chosen was the least dangerous, and afforded the only reasonable hope of preventing the escape of infection. To bring the vessel to some anchorage was necessary for various reasons. The stores, judging from the number of days occupied in the voyage, were nearly exhausted, and to place on board what would be required, even for a short cruise, would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, in the open sea. At any rate, as the consignee had no powers, the master would not have proceeded again to sea without negotiations on the subject of charter, insurance, etc., which would occupy time and afford opportunities for dangerous communication. Had it been possible to ensure that the vessel, if prevented from entering the harbour, would leave the group altogether without touching anywhere, or receiving any visits from natives or others, it might have become a question whether she should not be sent away, even at imminent risk to 500 lives, rather than 100,000 lives should be subjected to a risk scarcely less grave. But having no man-of-war at hand, or other means of prevention, it would be almost certain that the ship, if sent away, would put in at one of the many islands lying in any course which could be taken for leaving the Colony, and in that case, while the 500 would perhaps have been sacrificed,

[1] The chief medical officer.

the 100,000 would have been in still greater jeopardy. Moreover, the risk from cholera appeared to be slight, and as our stock of lymph, though small, was not exhausted, there was a reasonable hope of being able to utilise the panic that was certain to ensue, for the purpose of vaccination, and thus affording protection from small-pox before the disease could make much progress.

"Accordingly the *Leonidas* was brought within the reef; but an accident at once occurred, which for the time seemed likely to render the danger of infection far more imminent. From some cause, which I have as yet had no opportunity of ascertaining, the ship passed the appointed station and went aground upon the reef. There followed, as may be imagined, a period of intense anxiety to those on shore, who, like myself, were able to appreciate the gravity of the situation. If the ship could not be moved, it would probably, as being constructed of iron, in no long time go to pieces, and to prevent contact with some of the 500 persons on board would under such circumstances be impossible. But fortunately the tide was rising, and in about two hours, just as high water was reached, I had the satisfaction of seeing the ship float and shortly afterwards come to anchor."

The means adopted for guarding the ship and also for communicating with it and for supplying it with necessaries in such a manner as to avert danger from infection—the product of Dr. MacGregor's ingenuity—was as follows. A platform on trestles, resting on the reef at low water, permitted of articles required for the ship being placed on it; and being washed by each rising tide, was thus cleared of possible infection.

To guard the ship effectively was much more difficult, and the more important inasmuch as the authorities on board, and even the ship's doctor, did not appear to appreciate the necessity for strictness of quarantine.

"A large schooner was provided and moored between the *Leonidas* and the shore, this being intended to serve for the main guard and as quarters for the men employed as guards when off duty. Three other boats, each to contain three men, were stationed at different points, in such a position that a line drawn through them and the schooner would describe the half of a circle,

with a radius of about 350 yards, having the reef for a diameter and the *Leonidas* close to the centre. The necessary men were obtained by drafting all that could be spared from the armed constabulary and the police, and they were provided with rifles for the purpose of firing on anyone who, after warning, might attempt to break the quarantine.

"Two Europeans were employed, and provided with the necessary boats and crews for the purpose of securing frequent and regular visits to the guards by night and day; and in order to impress the men with the importance of the duty with which they were charged, I visited and addressed them on several occasions myself."

When on one occasion making a visit at night I found a man asleep, I deemed it necessary to cause him to be summarily flogged, strong measures being absolutely necessary where many thousand lives might very easily be lost by such carelessness. My despatch continues:—

"I wished to place guards on the ship itself, but there were no trustworthy Europeans available; while natives, besides being in any case useless for such a purpose, would almost certainly have died of fright.

"The greatest difficulty of all had yet to be solved, viz. how safely to dispose of the coolies on board so as to get rid of the ship without incurring demurrage, which the scanty funds in the Treasury would be but ill able to pay. After much consideration I determined to have the coolies carried to Yanucu Lailai, a small island off the coast of Ovalau, at a distance of some ten miles from Levuka, and within its barrier reef. This island had been intended to be used for a coolie depôt, and in anticipation of the arrival of the ship, houses had, by my order, been built upon it sufficient to lodge 350 men. But the number of coolies on board being in excess of this number, additional accommodation for 150 people had to be at once provided. With this object I put into force my powers as Supreme Chief, and levied all the male native population of the island of Ovalau and the neighbouring island of Moturiki. My summons was obeyed with alacrity, and though it was only issued on the 18th May, by the 20th of the same month 700 men were collected on the spot, the necessary food for them being forwarded from Levuka. The next day I went

down to Vanuca Lailai for the purpose of selecting the guard stations and making other necessary arrangements. I found the natives working with extraordinary activity, preparations for the commencement of building being already in a forward state. It was arranged that each house should be entrusted to a separate town, and the emulation thus excited proved to be so effective a stimulus to exertion that in three more days the whole of the houses were completed; while the guard stations, consisting of raised platforms on the reef and houses upon the extremities of Ovalau and Yanuca Levu, on either side of Yanuca Lailai, were in a forward state.

"In the course of a very few days all preparations were made for the reception of the coolies, and then we had to face what was perhaps the greatest difficulty of all—that of carrying them to the island. It was impracticable to move the *Leonidas* to Yanuca Lailai, so that guards would be required for the island in addition to those for the ship, which, as we gathered from the temper shown by the white men on board, would have to be watched with equal vigilance after the Indians had been removed. Moreover, it was necessary to station guards armed with rifles along the whole coast of Ovalau, between the ship and the island, to prevent contact between the boats carrying the coolies either with other boats or with the shore. Having no men available for the purpose, I called upon Ratu Epeli, the eldest son of Thakombau, to furnish them, he being Roko Tui of Tai Levu, the nearest province of the large island of Viti Levu. He responded loyally, and on the 27th May all was ready for the transport of the coolies, together with the stores required for them, and the cargo of the ship."

This proved a very tedious operation. Oars only being available for a course of nearly twenty miles, the boats could make only one trip each day. As every load of coolies was of necessity accompanied by a guard boat carrying one of my very few white officers, the process of transport was trying to us all. Up to the third day the process of transfer continued without serious interruption, when an event occurred which threatened to defeat all our precautions. On my usual afternoon trip to Yanuca I had gone half-way when I heard the sound of firing and loud shouts. With the aid of a binocular I quickly saw what

was the matter. The sailors of one of the emptied boats were amusing themselves by rowing into the guard-boat, which was bringing away from Yanuca not only the officer in charge of it, but two others who had been superintending the work there. If the infected boat were to come into contact with it, I should be obliged to put into quarantine all on board, and by thus losing the services of three of my best officers I should probably have found it impossible to continue successfully the fight against the inroad of infection. With only about fifteen yards of space separating the two boats, the sailors still gaining rapidly, instant action was required to save the situation. Stopping my boat, and ordering it to be steadied with the oars, I took a rifle from the stroke oar, and at a distance of some six hundred yards fired at the bow of the offending boat. The thought darted through my mind: 'If I have killed a man I shall be liable on going home to be tried for murder.' It was an anxious moment, but relief came quickly. The shot struck the water, slightly short, but sufficiently near to frighten the crew, who at once dropped their oars.

In two or three days the whole of the coolies were transferred to their destination on Yanuca, together with the ship's doctor, whom I induced to go into quarantine with them. The captain of the *Leonidas* still caused trouble by threats of breaking quarantine, of which he was unable to see the necessity. But happily he was at length appeased, and to my intense relief the ship soon left for San Francisco. No further cases of small-pox or cholera occurred on Yanuca, and when the last patient had been some weeks convalescent, the imprisoned people were at length released.

During the whole of this anxious period I was taking measures to counteract the effects of possible infection. The Roko Tuis of the different provinces were ordered to send trustworthy men to Levuka to be instructed in vaccination, the object being to vaccinate from many centres at once. By the time these men arrived and had been duly

taught, the Australian and New Zealand Governments, which had been requisitioned for the purpose, had largely added to our supplies of lymph; and so readily did the people accept this safeguard, the necessity and usefulness of which I had strongly impressed on the chiefs at the Bua meeting, that in about three months some sixty thousand people had been thus protected. As evidence of the blind faith which the people had come to place in the Government, I heard afterwards—and the news as much touched as amused me—that when the supply of lymph failed, some whole villages had excoriated their arms, in the belief that to suffer that part of the enjoined process was better than to do nothing!

When I knew that the *Leonidas* had not only gone out of harbour, but had really left the group without touching at any of the out islands, we all experienced a relief impossible to describe, and, for the first time for several weeks, were able to obtain a proper night's rest. For, what with the necessity of frequent supervision of the guards to ensure alertness, the continuous arrival of people from different parts of the colony with messages requiring immediate attention, the anxiety caused by hearing the report of firearms which had been entrusted to men who, while they knew how to fire, had but a faint perception of accurate aim —anything like continuous sleep had been impossible. The fatigue I suffered on this account was, I know, experienced in even greater degree by Dr. MacGregor, upon whom fell the principal work, which, I may say, could not have been more admirably performed.

When this exciting episode in our life came to an end, I brought a Bill into Council, not only to indemnify the officers of the Government for the breaches of law involved in the strong measures which the occasion had demanded, but to protect future Governors from the heavy responsibility I had been obliged to undertake without sanction of law.

Among the various ordinances passed by me through the Legislative Council in the year 1878–9, and approved by

the Secretary of State, was one devised to meet one of those difficulties apt to arise suddenly in a colony such as Fiji, which, if not promptly dealt with, have dangerous consequences. The ordinance in question was one "For the Preservation of Bêche-de-mer," a title by no means conveying the serious import which attached to the subject. The circumstances which rendered this law necessary, together with its object, were set forth in my despatch to the Secretary of State, dated in July, 1879.

Bêche-de-mer, a species of sea-worm, is much prized by the Chinese as food, and, indeed, as I know from personal experience at the Melbourne Club, can be converted, by an accomplished *chef*, into a soup quite equal to turtle. It is thus a valuable article of commerce, and a considerable quantity of it was already being exported from the colony.

The coral reefs where these worms are found were regarded by the natives as their own, each particular one being held by a province, island, or town, with as distinct a notion of proprietorship as in the case of land uncovered by water. They thus resented the intrusion of whites, who were beginning to occupy themselves in the bêche-de-mer fishing, and who, unlike themselves, took small and large alike, thereby threatening the extermination of this source of profit.

To remedy the denudation thus caused, the chiefs of certain provinces had placed a "tabu" on their reefs for some time previously, but when they had thus repaired the injury, whites again appeared, and began to deprive them of the results of their own self-denial.

The irritation occasioned by this proceeding in the province of Ba was so intense that, but for the forcible interposition of the Roko (who sent back to their provinces the natives employed by the white vessel-owner), it would have resulted in bloodshed—the chief having shown on this occasion a self-control under specially aggravating circumstances, almost as remarkable as his bravery elsewhere referred to.

In another case, to avoid a like danger, the European magistrate felt it necessary to seize the "white" vessel and send it to Levuka. The action of both of these officers was from an executive point of view amply excusable; but it was no doubt technically illegal, so that the Chief Justice considered himself justified in awarding heavy damages. The situation thus threatened to become a serious one, and though the permanent policy with regard to the reefs was not a matter to be determined by a *locum-tenens*, especially when the Governor was expected back almost immediately, some immediate action was imperatively necessary. Under the circumstances I passed without delay through the Legislature the above ordinance, rendering illegal the taking of bêche-de-mer without licence from the Governor.

Early in July, 1879, it was made known to me that the terribly destructive coffee-leaf disease had invaded the colony, having been brought in a Wardian case of plants imported from Ceylon by the owner of Great Amalgam, the infected plantation. I recognised at once that the situation was a grave one. Dr. MacGregor suggested the immediate destruction of the plantation, but without pledging myself to adopt that expedient, I lost no time in bringing a Bill sanctioning it into the Legislative Council—in case, after full consideration, it should seem advisable.

The Bill was opposed by Mr. Leefe, a planter member not interested in coffee, on the ground that I had a few months previously refused to sanction an award to him of a subsidy for the manufacture of coir-rope, and also because he was opposed to all protection to industry! The Chief Justice also opposed with characteristic vehemence on the ground of expense, which including compensation to the proprietor was estimated at £4,000. The cost was undoubtedly a serious consideration. For our financial condition was at this time even more than usually straitened. We were largely in debt to the Bank of New Zealand, and while no news had been received from

home with respect to the loan which had been proposed by Sir Arthur Gordon, there were persistent rumours in the colony that it had been found impracticable to raise it. Yet I should have had no hesitation in incurring the necessary expense, but for grave doubts whether the money so much needed for other purposes would not be thrown away. There were no other coffee plantations within a hundred miles of that infected, so that there was no danger of the infection being spread by the wind; but if the germs of the disease were so minute, as Dr. MacGregor's report represented them to be, that they could, in dangerous quantity, and yet invisible to the naked eye, be carried away in clothing, the many visitors to the plantation in the several months during which the disease must have been present, had in all probability by that time disseminated it over all the colony. And so, after passing the Bill, I determined to delay acting upon it until the arrival of Sir Arthur Gordon in the course of a few days.

On Sir Arthur's arrival, which was unexpectedly delayed, he regretted my decision, this being the only exception from his general approval of my administration. The event, however, went far to render it probable that I was right. The authorities at Kew were of opinion that the disease, having been some months in the colony, could not have been suppressed at the time the report was made to me. In confirmation of this view it may be mentioned that shortly after my departure the disease was discovered on plantations situate on islands more than one hundred miles from the Great Amalgam, probably carried thither at least some weeks previously. The sequel of this episode was that Sir Arthur Gordon adopted a treatment of the infected coffee trees on the Great Amalgam which cost the colony some £2,500.[1] This attempt at prevention,

[1] This sum included the compensation which, by a judgment of Chief Justice B. during my second administration of the colony, was awarded to the proprietor, who had introduced the disease, in respect of the unsuccessful experiment upon his plantation, and who would in any case have lost all benefit from the trees upon it.

however, proved ineffectual, and the disease spread all over the colony.

Still, I question whether the disease was not after all a blessing in disguise, as saving many large sums which would have been uselessly expended in coffee plantations. For the luxuriant growth of the coffee plant, and the abundance of its fruit in Fiji, had already caused many to contemplate the establishment of plantations, and, but for the inroad of the disease, their projects would in all probability have been carried into execution. In such case I have little doubt there would, even in the absence of the disease, have been general failure from causes similar to those which produced the unprofitableness of cotton, viz. insufficient command of cheap labour. For, unless all my reading on the subject has misled me, the amount of labour required on a coffee plantation is by no means uniform all the year round, and requires a large accession at the time of "picking." But such an accession in a great part of Fiji is unobtainable, or obtainable nowhere with certainty, while indentured labourers in sufficient number for the busiest season could not be otherwise than unprofitable, as there would be no employment for many of them during several months of the year. I even doubt whether, in any case, Fiji coffee, as being grown at a lower elevation than the best product of Jamaica, Ceylon, and Java, would be of a quality capable of bearing the cost of imported coolies.

Shortly before Sir Arthur Gordon's return in September, 1879, there occurred a disagreeable incident which might easily have had serious consequences. Maafu, the Roko Tui Lau, being in Levuka, having seen one of his people, as he considered, ill-treated in the gaol, and having lost his temper while remonstrating with the gaoler, forcibly removed the man from custody. This was, of course, a serious breach of the law which could not be overlooked; and yet the public punishment of such an offence would so humilitate one of the most powerful chiefs as to seriously

injure his prestige with his people, and would thus not improbably render him disaffected. Fortunately, my relations with him had been of a very cordial character, and gave me grounds for hoping that a private interview might have a good result. I therefore sent Mr. Le Hunte[1] to bring him to me. Le Hunte, who was at the time acting as my private secretary, was fortunately intimate with him, being one of those rare Europeans who in talking with natives can avoid patronage and condescension, and are possessed of a sufficiently sensitive delicacy to permit of intercourse with them without making them feel their inferiority. Le Hunte met Maafu on his way to see me with his rescued prisoner, which showed that however wrong-headed the act, it was not done out of deliberate contumacy.

I found that the difficulty of dealing with the matter was increased by the fact that the rescued prisoner had really been treated with undue harshness, so that the loss of temper on the part of his chief who witnessed it was not without excuse. However, after listening patiently to Maafu's story, which I interrupted only by one or two questions, I was glad to observe that he was already much cooled down when I began to express my view of the matter. I, of course, told him that however bad might have been the act of the gaoler, his own was worse. He had committed a serious offence, to overlook which would seriously compromise the reputation of the Government for impartiality. I pointed out to him that everyone, from the Queen to the humblest of her subjects, was subject to law, and I was fortunate in being able to illustrate this by what had recently occurred to myself. For only a few weeks before I, Her Majesty's representative, had had to pay a fine in respect of one of the animals belonging to Government House—I forget whether it was a pony or a cow—which had been caught trespassing and taken to the pound! This information evidently

[1] Now Administrator of New Guinea.

astonished him greatly, accustomed as he had been to a condition of things in which chiefs were above the law, and I had no longer any great difficulty in persuading him to go before the magistrate and submit to any punishment which might be awarded for his offence. In order, however, to save his dignity as far as possible, I arranged that his case should be tried as soon as the court opened next morning, when there would be little or no public attendance, he at the same time undertaking to plead guilty. He appeared at the time appointed, the magistrate fined him £10, and thus the matter was happily settled. So far from being rendered disaffected by the occurrence, Maafu, when he saw me afterwards, showed clearly that his respect for British justice had increased; and no one joined more heartily than he in the demonstration of regard to my wife which was made by the chiefs a few days afterwards.

In August, 1879, I received a communication from the head chief of the island of Rotumah, expressing a desire to be under the same Government as Fiji, and requesting me to send him advice in view of the fact that war was about to break out. Rotumah, since annexed to Fiji, is over 250 miles north of any islands properly belonging to that group. It is of small area, scarcely exceeding fifteen square miles. Its inhabitants, then numbering about 3,000, though much resembling in appearance others of the light-coloured Polynesian races, seem to be nevertheless of different origin. For while the languages of the peoples of Hawaii, Samoa, Tonga, and even of the New Zealand Maoris have evidently been originally the same, though the first and last of these places are some 3,000 miles apart, yet the language of Rotumah, with the exception of some Polynesian words, is of a totally different character. Captain Dawson, R.N., on whose ship I was carried to the island in 1881, and who had recently come from Japan, was struck with the likeness in sound between Rotuman and Japanese; and though my visits to Japan were

too widely separated in time from my last hearing of Rotuman to be able to confirm his impression, I note it as worthy of being the subject of future inquiry. It is, in any case, curious that the people of a little lonely island in the Pacific should be so different in language and other respects from any of their nearest neighbours; and it seems at least possible that at some distant period a Japanese vessel, perhaps one of those which formerly traded to Siam, had drifted far out of its course and was eventually wrecked upon Rotumah. On such a small population a very insignificant number of a superior race would have great effect, and perhaps the Rotuman language, whatever it may originally have been, was thus largely modified.

But whatever the origin of the people, they were certainly possessed of a higher average of intelligence than any other people of the Western Pacific with whom I came in contact. They were specially distinguished as sailors, and were thus able to command upon Australian vessels the same wages as white men. As many of the able-bodied earned large sums in this way, and the island produced all that is necessary for native consumption, while the government of the chiefs (each of whom with one exception, the Sau, was rather *primus inter pares* than of a different order) was a very mild one, the people might have remained in peace and reasonable happiness but for the curse of religious differences. Though all had been converted to Christianity, about two-thirds had become Wesleyan and one-third Roman Catholic. As the votaries of each faith had, as usual, been taught to regard those of the other with pity and contempt, it is not surprising that on one or more previous occasions hostilities had broken out between them, though, as far as I could learn, without any decisive result. It would almost seem that the authorities of the Wesleyan Mission in Fiji looked upon this warfare at least with complacency, as likely to end in the extermination of the Catholics. For when shortly before my arrival in the Pacific Sir Arthur Gordon had requested them to permit his charter of the mission vessel

with the object of putting an end to the fighting, they declined with what appeared a very inadequate excuse.

My reply to the Rotuman chief on this occasion was to the effect that I would report his wishes for the Queen's consideration, but I was unable to say whether Her Majesty would gratify them. With regard, however, to the request for advice, I took this course. Lieutenant (now Sir Graham) Bower happened to be in Levuka harbour in command of H.M. schooner *Conflict*. He was bound for the New Hebrides, but at my request consented to diverge from his course for the purpose of a visit to Rotumah. He undertook also to make inquiries into the condition of the island as regards the desirability of annexation, and, above all, to do his best to prevent war, at least, until the receipt of H.M.'s decision.

This commission Lieutenant Bower fulfilled admirably. He succeeded in obtaining promises of peace until the receipt of news respecting the fate of the petition for annexation, and his report, in so far as I remember it, was an excellent one, giving indication of the ability which afterwards caused the appointment of its author to a high civil position. The subject of Rotumah is further dealt with in the account of my second administration of Fiji.

I have mentioned above that the warfare of Fiji in its cannibal days was, as far as I could learn, principally of the cowardly character which characterises that of most savages. I attribute this, however, to the fact that as great credit attached to the destruction of an enemy by stealth and cunning, as by fighting on equal terms. For several instances occurred during my life in the South Seas which showed that Fijians could, when the occasion arose, do acts of extraordinary courage. During my first administration of Fiji, it was my agreeable duty to present to Roko Tui Ba, one of the high chiefs, a sword sent for him by order of the Secretary of State as Her Majesty's recognition of an act which could hardly have been surpassed in bravery by any of those which have earned the Victoria Cross. During

the expedition undertaken in 1877 against the Viti Levu mountaineers, a native house, containing several barrels of gunpowder, caught fire. The loss of the ammunition to the Government force would have caused much inconvenience, while the explosion which seemed imminent would probably have proved fatal to many of the soldiers engaged in extinguishing the fire. Whereupon the chief in question coolly entered the building, though it was blazing all round, and kicked out the dangerous barrels. I was told by a spectator that these were too hot to be touched, and it was a miracle that the man and the building were not blown to atoms.

Again in 1879 there occurred an instance of heroism on the part of a woman which showed not only high courage sustained through two days and nights, but wonderful presence of mind at a critical juncture when it might be supposed that, after so long a struggle against imminent danger, further power of resistance would have succumbed to physical fatigue. The case was so remarkable a one that I described it in a despatch to the Secretary of State, which interested her late Majesty so much that she requested a copy to be sent to her for her private use.

What probably interested Her Majesty most was a translation of the account given of their experiences by Aisea and Namalai and Mereani (man and wife), the heroine and hero of the occurrence.

"We left in a canoe in the month of May to attend a Solevn (feast) at Totoya. There were twenty-three of us on board.

"We started from Susuii, Lomaloma, and put in at Nayau, remaining there two Sundays, leaving again on the Monday for Vanua Vatu, where we remained three days.

"On Friday morning of the same week we set sail, with a northerly wind which carried us east of Navatu Reef, passing quite close to an island called Taranasici, from which, just at dusk the same evening, we sighted the island of Rabara, when the wind died away.

"We sculled the canoe during the night until a southerly wind sprang up, when we kept the canoe head to wind until morning. Joni (captain) then proposed that we should make sail again, and Saimone, one of the crew, removed the 'totoko,'[1] which allowed the yards to swing inboard, causing the outrigger, which was thus over-weighted, to sink.

[1] A pole used for booming out the yards and sail.

"The canoe then filled and turned over. While she was under water we got on it, adjusted our clothes and prayed, after which we dismantled the canoe of her gear to enable her to float better and endeavoured to turn her over, but did not succeed.

"The captain of the canoe then told us to abandon her and swim, but to keep together. We did so, leaving the canoe about eight or nine a.m. (Saturday), taking the mast, sculls, poles, and other things belonging to the canoe to help us in swimming.

"We swam together all day until evening, when it came on to rain with thunder and lightning. My wife and myself got separated from the others during the night and we never saw them again, whether because we swam faster or went in a different direction we cannot tell, but are inclined to think we swam faster than the others, as a great number were clinging to the mast and could not make so much headway as we did.

"My wife and I had with us one canoe scull and a medium-sized cedar box, which contained our clothing and some Government despatches.

"After swimming for some time my wife got sleepy, and I then took her by the hands and swam with her for some time, and then when she awoke we continued our course again, swimming side by side.

"I then got sleepy, and my wife took me by the arm and kept me afloat until I got over my sleepiness, when we both swam on, changing and taking turn and turn with the box and the scull, for the box affording a better support than the scull, the one who had the latter became tired in the course of time.

"This was our first night in the water away from the canoe.

"Next morning, Sunday, we were still swimming and continued so up till midday; at this time my wife saw an old (ripe) cocoanut drifting; we picked it up, I husked it with my teeth, and we ate it.

"We kept on swimming until evening at which time we sighted Totoya, but could distinguish no break in the reef and continued swimming till midnight.

"When we got abreast of the passage (this passage is on the north-east side of the island) a shark came up and passed close to my wife, touching her on the breast. She let go the box and clung to my neck. The shark swam away, but soon returned, and this time it caught hold of my foot. I then said to my wife, 'A shark has bitten me.' I, however, managed to frighten it away with the scull, but it soon returned again and caught hold of my wife's cloth (sulu) and after a short struggle succeeded in tearing it away from her and swam away with it. Probably the cloth got over its head or else entangled in between its teeth, for it never returned.

"I felt so weak from the effects of the bite of the shark that I grew faint and almost went down, when my wife let go the scull to which she was clinging and assisted me on to the box to rest myself, whilst she made an effort to get us both towards shore, which we reached during the night, but did not land together nor at the same place.

"We were lifted by a wave by which my wife succeeded in gaining a rocky ledge on the shore to which she clung.

"I, however, was swept out again by the returning wave and was carried to some distance from where my wife landed, losing hold of the box, which I

soon afterwards heard striking against the rocks close to me. On hearing this I knew that I must be near the shore and swam towards it. I landed and remained where I was until daylight (Monday), when my wife walked along the point and found me lying down. She raised me up and led me to a small cave near the point where she landed. She then returned to the spot at which I reached shore and brought the box to where I was. We opened it, took out the despatches and clothing and spread them out to dry, after which we laid down in the cave and slept. During our sleep a man came to the cave and on seeing the box called out. My wife heard the cry and went out to him. The man's name was Akuila. He asked her, 'Where have you come from?' She replied, 'We have been wrecked.'

"They both then came into the cave and woke me. After a little conversation we begged him to give us some food. He at once went and got us some bananas and sugar cane, and cooked the bananas for us.

"We asked him if he would go to his town and get a canoe to take us there.

"He did so, arriving with it that night. We then left for the town (Ketei), at which place we arrived safely about midnight.

"We then thanked the living God for so sparing us.

"PROVINCIAL OFFICE, 20*th August*, 1879."

I mentioned in my despatch that Aisea and Mereani, having come from their home at my request, spent some days near us at Nasova, that their modesty and ingenuousness much impressed us, and together with various corroborating circumstances told me by their chief, Maafu, tended to confirm their story. I forgot to mention, however, that I was chiefly convinced of the truth of what was *primâ facie* so incredible, by the severe cross-examination to which I subjected each of these young people when out of hearing one of the other. The searching questions I put to them as to unimportant details, about which collusive invention was practically impossible, received replies which were in every case so consistent as to dispel all doubt of their genuineness.

With further reference to the question of credibility, I quote from my despatch :—

"As regards the distance they swam, and the time they passed in the water, I find on inquiry that many similar instances are on record. Several cases have been mentioned to me that have occurred within recent times, where natives, usually women, have displayed scarcely less endurance in the water; and I am in-

formed that quite recently a party of women swam from one of the Yasawa islands (in the western part of the group) to a town in the province of Ba, on the coast of Viti Levu, a distance of about thirty miles.

"Moreover, as stated the other day at my table by the Roko Tui Tai Levu, there is, within the memory of people still living, another instance of heroism performed under similarly difficult, and if possible, still more pathetic circumstances, where a woman upset with her husband between the islands of Bau and Gau, swam with him until he died from exhaustion, and was at length saved while supporting his lifeless body.

"Whether the specific gravity of woman is less, or their form is better adapted for support or movement in the water, their power of endurance in that element seems to be unquestionably greater than that of man; so that when accidents happen such as that above related, women are more commonly the survivors.

"The possibility of sleeping in the water appears to be well known, and the finding of the cocoanut was by no means an improbable circumstance, inasmuch as the shores of the islands to windward are fringed with innumerable palms of this species, and the fruit is not infrequently met with far out at sea.

"As regards the carrying off of the woman's 'sulu' by the shark, the Roko Tui Tai Levu has mentioned to me a case within his own experience, where a man was saved under almost exactly similar circumstances. This shark, though strong enough to get the better of the woman in the struggle, was, as appears from the shape of the man's wound, evidently a small one; and no doubt a fathom square of cotton print would have proved an inconvenience, such as for the time to preclude further pursuit, whether it covered his eyes, became entangled in his teeth, or even if it had been swallowed."

There have been instances in the South Seas of natives being picked up by passing vessels when swimming out of sight of land. That which prevents long swims anywhere but in the tropics is the coldness of the water, whereas the sea around the Fijian islands is always of a temperature in the neighbourhood of 80° Fahr.

In reply to my despatch on this subject the Secretary of State conveyed Her Majesty's appreciation of the heroic

conduct of Mereani and her husband, and suggested that as neither the Albert Medal nor that of the Royal Humane Society were applicable to the case, some reward should be given to them by the colony. I do not doubt that Sir Arthur Gordon, who received this despatch after I had left for England, gave a liberal interpretation to this suggestion.

On hearing of our approaching departure, the high chiefs spontaneously and without any suggestion from me, collected from all parts of the group to bid us farewell. After the conclusion of the native ceremonies (including of of course a *yaghona*-drinking), appropriate to the occasion, and after they and I had exchanged official, and at the same time cordial farewells, there followed an event which was entirely unexpected and not on that account less gratifying. Thakombau sent a message to my wife, inquiring when she would receive him; and when she had appointed a time, he, to the astonishment of all who saw it, appeared at Nasova, carrying a mat on his shoulder, Maafu next to him, and all the other high chiefs following in single file and doing the same. Coming into the house (I being at the time designedly absent at my office), Thakombau first, and then each of the others in turn, laid their mats at my wife's feet, upon which the ex-king made to her a most touching speech, heartily recognising her invariable kindliness to them, wishing her, myself, and Ratu Popi (the native name for my little boy, at that time called "Poppy") prolonged health and happiness, and finally expressing a hope that when far away in England she would sometimes give a thought to her warm friends in Fiji. The astonishment mentioned above was occasioned by the fact that Thakombau should condescend to carry anything but a club. I was told that he had never before done so on a public occasion, and intended it as a specially great compliment.

When, as I have mentioned, Sir Arthur Gordon returned to Fiji, my official connection with the colony for the time

ceased. He landed from the man-of-war, which had carried him from Samoa, in full uniform, covered with the scarlet silk gown of D.C.L., which he had recently received from the University of Oxford, thus causing considerable sensation among the whites as well as natives. By his express desire I consented to take part in a formal ceremony, in which—a considerable concourse being present—I handed back to him the seal of the colony, and he thereupon thanked me cordially for the manner in which I had conducted the administration during his absence. I fear that the absence from my nature of the sentimental precluded my part in this unusual function from being adequately performed; but the kind intention which suggested the idea was none the less warmly appreciated. A few days afterwards we left Fiji for Sydney on our way home. Among the many who came to see us off was Maafu, who was crying as he wished us good-bye. However incongruous are tears with so huge a frame as that of this chief, we in this case could not but be touched by them, especially in view of the disagreeable scene which I had had with him a few days before.

And so came to an end my first administration of the government of Fiji. It will be seen that it was assumed under peculiar difficulties, and that events occurred during the year and a quarter of its duration which caused it to be invested with special responsibilities. Indeed, having had the advantage of reading the records of several colonies, I am able to assert positively that numerous Governors pass through their six years of office with much less cause for embarrassment and with far fewer calls for the exercise of responsibility under unprecedented conditions than occurred to me within this short period. Though circumstances compelled me on several occasions to adopt somewhat strong measures, all of them were approved by the Secretary of State; and while no act of mine met with even a shadow of censure from him, it will be seen in the sequel that the general conduct of my office met with his

special recognition. And yet it is to this exceptional service that the Treasury, as I understand in accordance with its usual stolid routine, applied a rule, which, with respect to pension, ignores acting appointments—a rule, moreover, which had never been made known to me or the colonial service—so as to cause me, on my final breakdown in health, a loss of a quarter of the pension which I had fairly, and I may add very hardly, earned.

A special service for which I was summoned from the other end of the world, which involved voyages, going and returning, of some 28,000 miles, and which, in the opinion of the highest authority, was well performed, would seem to have deserved exceptionally favourable treatment. It was, however, entirely forgotten or ignored when, on my resigning the government of Hong Kong on account of prolonged ill-health, the question of pension came to be considered, and I was treated in respect of it exactly as if I had remained in my comparatively unimportant post at St. Lucia.

END OF VOLUME I.

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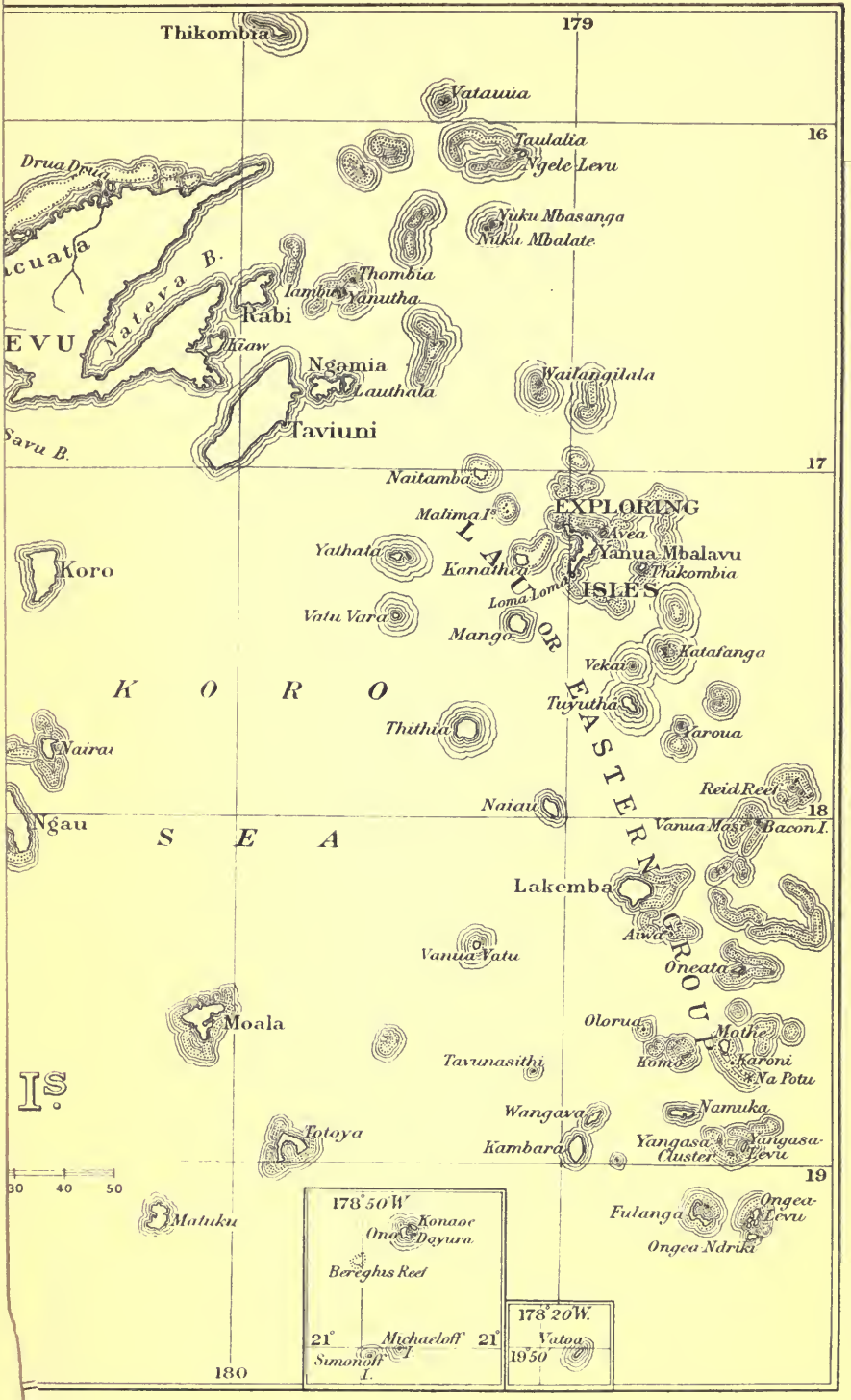

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